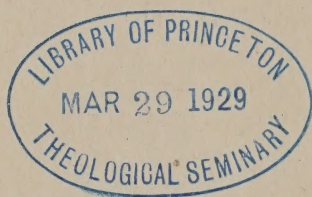


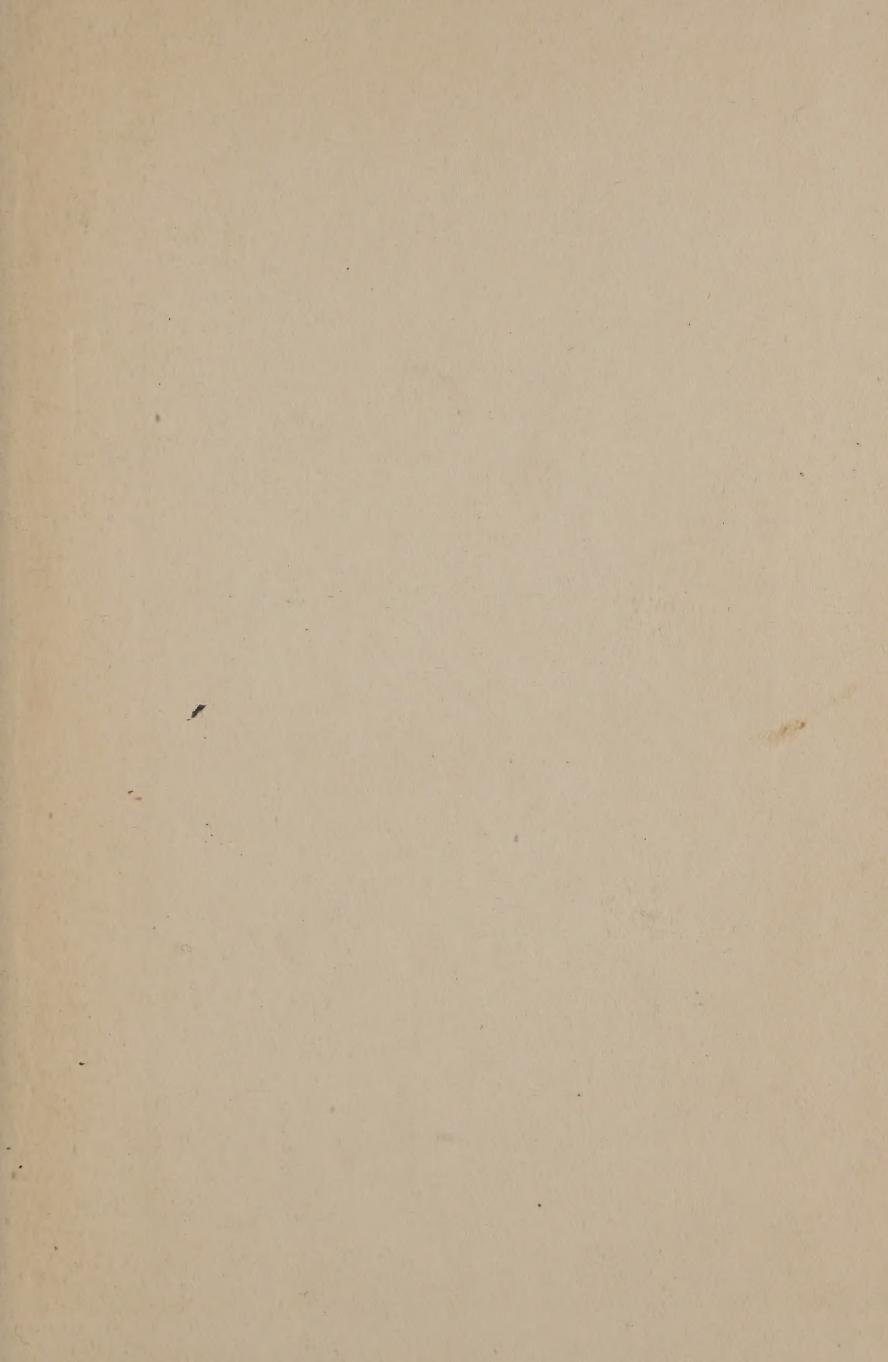


CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT IN INDIA

By
MRS. ARTHUR PARKER



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Children of the light in
India



CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT IN INDIA

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Children of the Light in India

BIOGRAPHIES OF NOTED INDIAN CHRISTIANS

✓
Rebecca J. Parker

By

MRS. ARTHUR PARKER

*Missionary at Trivandram, India;
Author, "Sahu Sundar Singh,
Called of God," etc.*

With Introduction by

THE RT. REVEREND ABRAHAM MAR THOMA, M.A., D.D.

Suffragan Metropolitan, Travancore



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To
All Lovers of Jesus
in India

INTRODUCTION

THIS is yet another book of Christian biography from the sympathetic pen of Mrs. Arthur Parker.

There is nothing so potent to convince a seeker after truth, of the worth and power of Christianity, as the life of our Lord depicted in the Gospels, and the same life reproduced, in some measure and degree, in the lives of His saints in all ages and climes. Nor is there anything more encouraging and inspiring to the friends and helpers of missionary work, than the record of the saints gathered into the Church as the fruit of such missionary effort.

It is therefore very gratifying to find that Mrs. Parker has thought it good, at the close of her long and arduous missionary career in India, to give this volume of the lives of Indian saints as a parting gift to the Indian Church, which she has loved so well, and for which she has laboured for so long with constant devotion and unflagging energy.

I have much pleasure in recommending this volume to all the friends of India and the Indian Church, both here and in Britain and America; and consider it a privilege to be associated with the volume by writing this introduction for it. I trust and pray that this volume may go forth fraught with manifold blessings to India.

ABRAHAM MAR THOMA.

*Bishop's Palace,
Tiruvella, Travancore.*

PREFACE

THE heart of India changes not. She is forever seeking God.

Conditions change, but not entirely, and although India to-day is finding in her soul a response to the call of Him who bore the cross, there is still a hesitancy to place Him first and follow Him entirely. But all the time heroic souls are making the great venture, and in casting themselves wholly upon Christ they find, as men have always found, that their search after God is ended when they see Him in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Many noble Christian converts in India to-day can bear witness to this fact. These brief records of seeking souls who in the past struggled into light, and sacrificed their all to follow Christ, are written for encouragement and quickening, that all who pray, "Thy Kingdom come," may remember India in this her critical hour of spiritual need.

R. J. P.

Arundel, England.

ALL SAINTS

“Flushed to their summits hoary,
God’s Himalayas lift
Transcendent peaks in glory
Above the clouds that drift.
Like prophets turning
They catch the earliest ray,
The rose of sunshine burning
The pall of night away.
They reckon not of abysses,
Nor awful depths below,
Those peaks the sunshine kisses
Bathed in auroral glow;
So saints, who strong and tender
Outsoar our valleys dim,
Reflect for us the splendour
Which they have caught from *Him*.”

CONTENTS

	THE HINDU'S WEARINESS	14
I.	DILÁWAR KHÁN, AFGHAN ROBBER CHIEF	15
II.	KRISHNA PILLAI, TAMIL PANDIT AND CHRISTIAN POET	23
III.	PANDITA RÁMABAI	33
IV.	GOORU CHARAN BOSE	56
V.	PROFESSOR RÁM CHANDRA	65
VI.	GANGA DHOR SARRAOJI, FIRST ORISSA CONVERT	69
VII.	NARÁYAN VÁMAN TILAK, MARATHI POET	77
VIII.	VENKAYYA	94
IX.	IMÁD-UD-DÍN	101
X.	JUDGE B. C. CHATTERJEA	112
XI.	MATHÚRA NÁTH BOSE	119
XII.	CHANDRA LEELA, PRIESTESS	125
XIII.	PRINCE RÁMA VARMA OF COCHIN	141
XIV.	VETHAMÁNIKAM, FIRST TRAVANCORE CONVERT	148
XV.	MOSES WALSALAM, MALAYÁLAM POET- PREACHER	160
	TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE EAST .	179
	CHRIST AND INDIAN WOMANHOOD . .	191

ILLUSTRATIONS

Rám Chandra, Indian Scientist.....	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
Pandita Rámabai	34
Venkayya, who sought and found	96
Chandra Leela	126
Moses Walsalam and His Gospel Cart	162

THE HINDU'S WEARINESS

“Weary are we of empty creeds,
Of deafening calls to fruitless deeds;
Weary of priests who cannot pray,
Of guides who show no man the way;

“Weary of rites wise men condemn,
Of worship linked with lust and shame;
Weary of custom, blind, enthroned,
Of conscience trampled, God disowned;

“Weary of men in sections cleft,
Hindu life of love bereft;
Woman debased, no more a queen,
Nor knowledge what she once hath been;

“Weary of babbling about birth,
And of the mockery men call mirth,
Weary of life not understood,
A Babel, not a brotherhood;

“Weary of Kali Yuga years,
Freighted with chaos, darkness, fears—
Life is an ill, the sea of births is wide,
And we are weary; who will be our guide?”

—*From an Indian Newspaper.*

I

DILÁWAR KHÁN

AFGHAN ROBBER CHIEF

THE mountainous regions that form the great northern boundary of India have from time immemorial been the home of hordes of robbers, and the happy hunting-ground of lawless tribes. These marauders' haunts lie hidden in the caves of almost inaccessible regions, whence the men issue forth, flooding the plains beneath and even reaching Attock, Peshawar and other cities in British territory.

Such border tribes are the terror of the peaceful folk on this side the Hindu Khúsh and Himálaya Mountains, whose villages they burn, whose cattle they carry off and whose inhabitants they murder. Even at the present day a watchful eye must always be kept on the long borderland of difficult country forming the frontier, and the troops are often called out to suppress raiders and drive them back to their mountain fastnesses.

Long ago a certain robber chief made his centre of operations a locality amongst the hills above

Attock, and for many years he terrorized the neighbourhood by his cruelty and utter disregard of human life. His plan was to watch the merchant traders as they passed on their business across these hills. His scouts kept him informed as to the social status and wealth of such travellers, whence they came, what they carried, and whither they were going. Should such travellers be of no great position or wealth, they escaped lightly, but when a man was known to be worth looting he would suddenly find himself swooped down upon, kidnapped, and carried off to some distant cave, where he was made a prisoner.

Not satisfied with confiscating his goods and money, the robber chief would demand a high ransom for the return of the man alive to his friends. In cases where response to such a demand was long delayed, he resorted to some such method as cutting off a finger or two from the captive, and sending them by trusty messengers to the relatives, with the threat that if the entire money were not immediately forthcoming the fingers would be followed by the hand.

Now, Diláwar Khán was a strict Mahommedan. He believed his creed and assiduously carried out the observances of his religion, fasting at the stated times, and praying five times a day according to rule. But he knew nothing in his religion that interfered with his method of life, and the excitement of his adventurous career

held great charm for him. Such priests as he knew, who of course benefited by his depredations, assured him that he was doing God service, an assurance that met with his entire approval.

When the British took possession of the Panjáb they soon heard of the fame of the robber chief, and finding no way of entrapping him a price was set on his head. From that time small forces of troops under British leadership scoured the hills above Attock to find him. He often had hair-breadth escapes, and rejoiced in the excitement of making the soldiers chase him; then, suddenly swerving, he would disappear into some crevice known only to himself. Or he would as suddenly stand transfixed in the midst of tall grass or standing corn, while the cavalry pursued and plunged about hopelessly in search of him. He could never be caught in spite of the price set on his head.

But one day a civil officer happened to be in a frontier village just over the border, and there he met Diláwar Khán. In lieu of his head the officer gave him the offer of a post in the Guide Corps, whose work was to patrol those hills and keep the peace, so making the country safe for travellers. The robber chief scorned the offer. Whereupon the answer made him was that if he continued to hold out he would be hunted down and brought to the gallows. The steady persistence with which

he was pursued, and the fact that the British troops were getting to know the country, now made his life less safe. Being unwilling to part with his head, he one day made up his mind to watch for the friendly British officer and attempt negotiations with him.

The day came when the meeting took place, and Diláwar Khán remarked that as the British government wanted to give a price for his head he had brought his head with him to claim it. The officer, understanding his man, at once took up the offer; paying the money, he enlisted the chief as a soldier in the Guide Corps. Now the acceptance of the price put upon his head and the taking of an oath to serve in the Guide Corps bound him doubly to a promise of fidelity to his new overlord, and he who had never served any man before now became the faithful and valuable servant of the British Ráj. Very soon he rose to be an officer, and was trusted by all who knew him. Under his leadership all that borderland country was at peace.

After some time Diláwar Khán happened to be in Pesháwar when, to his amazement, he saw a British military man preaching in the city square, and surrounded by a troublesome crowd, so he drew near to see what it was all about. There were no missions in the Panjáb at that time, and, be it said to the honour of a noble British Christian soldier, the Gospel was first published in those

parts by Colonel Wheeler. Diláwar Khán pushed his way up to the colonel and immediately entered into a religious discussion.

The colonel eventually offered him a copy of a book called *Mizán ul Haqq*,—*The Balance of Truth*,—which he accepted with the intention of reading and refuting it. But unexpectedly he was confronted in its pages by truth he could not subvert and, finding no answer, he took the book to his Maulvi, who abused and reprimanded him severely for reading it. He then took it to another Maulvi, whose order was to destroy it and get on with his prayers, while a friend told him he would become an infidel if he tampered with such a book. Diláwar simply replied: "What a wonderful book this must be! I have studied the Qurán for many years and believed it, and yet you say this book has the power to turn me against Islám and to make me a Christian! It must be a remarkable book indeed! "

Now, it happened that just then the writer of this book, a Dr. Pfander, came to open a mission in the city of Pesháwar, and Diláwar, hearing of his arrival, went at once to visit him, saying: "I would walk many miles to meet that man." A strange close friendship sprang up between these two men, and their conversations together fully convinced Diláwar that Christ was the living Way to God and, this being so, that his own old faith must be false.

His fierce nature, not yet wholly tamed, caused him to turn completely round, and he now challenged his own Mahommedan leaders to disprove the truths of Christianity and to show how Islám could be what they represented it to be. These men failed to satisfy his mind, declaring that he was no judge as to right and wrong, but that he was only fit to obey. When he heard this he boldly asserted that Christianity was true, and began a violent attack on his old faith.

As long as Diláwar remained a Mahommedan in name he was left alone by his co-religionists, but when he added this impiety of becoming a Christian to the perfidy of submission to the British, he brought upon himself the fury and hatred of them all. They sought every opportunity of insulting him, and he was publicly denounced by a Mullah whom he had worsted in argument, as being worthy of death.

Sir Herbert Edwardes, another fine British Christian soldier, greatly influenced Diláwar in his understanding and acceptance of Christianity. Riding along the same road between Attock and Amritsar, these two men came together apparently by accident. They rode side by side, and Diláwar spoke of what was filling his mind. He begged for guidance as to how he could confound the Mullah and Maulvis of his old faith. Sir Herbert seems to have given him the story of redeeming love in a way he had never heard before, and as

he listened he felt his heart burning with a new-born zeal and love.

Not long after this the Sepoy mutiny broke out, and Diláwar, with his regiment, moved to Delhi. They took part in every attack and were always in the front ranks of the fighting line. A full half of their number soon lay dead around the walls of Delhi, but Diláwar seemed to bear a charmed life. He rose from being a petty officer to the highest position allowed to an Indian in the army in those days, and became a subhadár major. During those awful months he found much solace in reading his Bible and in prayer with two Christian officers, and by God's grace he developed a humility and earnestness quite foreign to the lawless rugged character natural to him all his life.

When the mutiny came to an end and the country somewhat settled down he returned to Pesháwar, and came forward to make open confession of his faith in Jesus Christ, and was baptized. In presenting himself for baptism he asked the missionary, "Has Christ commanded His people to be baptized?" "Then that is enough for me," and he insisted on baptism. The law of Christ, which is the law of love and obedience, had at last changed this wild man into a faithful and devoted follower of his Lord.

In his high position as subhadár major he was able to influence and support others who, like him, were finding their way through many difficulties to

Christ. His large Bible was his constant companion and he made no secret of reading it. The ill-treatment and threats and frequent attempts made on his life on the part of his former co-religionists across the Border never moved him, although for long before his death strangers were not allowed to come close up to him without being called to halt and declare themselves friends.

The British government honoured him by sending him as a special envoy on a secret mission to Central Asia. He was quite ready for any adventure, and full well knowing the risks he ran of seizure by his enemies, he willingly consented to go. He started on the mission and passed through Cábul safely and then through Badakshán. But on the other and lonelier side of that place he was entrapped by treachery amidst the snowy wastes, and taken to the chief of Chitrál. The manner of his death appears to be unknown, but his last words are reported to have been, "Tell the sircar (government) that I am glad to die in their service, and give my salaam to the commissioner of Pesháwar and to the Pádri Sahib (missionary)."

*"It is not death to die!
For when life's light is fled,
And death's gloom o'er thee shed,
Empty thy heart of dread:
For Christ is there.
It is not death to die."*

II

KRISHNA PILLAI

TAMIL PANDIT AND CHRISTIAN POET

THE story of Krishna Pillai belongs to the past century, for his birth took place in 1827, and the main part of his life was lived in the days when the East seemed unchangeable. Foreign education had taken root in India, and some Christian knowledge was to be found in various parts of the country; but for a caste person to confess Christ meant his complete social ostracism from Hindu society. Thus he became a homeless outcast from his family, if he survived the harder fate of death by poison.

From infancy Krishna was brought up a strict Hindu, imbued with the same strong beliefs that characterized his father and home and the circle amongst whom he moved. His father appears to have been a deeply religious man—just, foreseeing and possessing many graces of character. He was well acquainted with the literature of his day, and familiar with the great epics of the Hindu religion, which he assiduously taught to his two sons. Krishna Pillai was wont to declare that his early

love of study and learning had not only enabled him to attain the coveted position of a leading pandit, but that through and because of this he had eventually become closely acquainted with Christian truth. This, the greatest factor of his life, he attributes to "the doing of the Holy Mind," which led him to climb the steep ascents of earthly knowledge that he might find a hidden treasure he sought not after.

Brought up from childhood in the atmosphere of Hindu learning and being by nature a poet, he early decided to give his life to the pursuit of knowledge, and to seek diversion in the use of his poetical gifts, little dreaming in what way he would eventually accomplish his high purposes. But the goal was before him, and he never turned aside because of the distractions and difficulties which beset him. A hundred years ago Tamil grammars were written in the form of poetry, with a stylus on the leaves of the palmyra palm, and were difficult to obtain. So Krishna and his brother found themselves able to study only by becoming disciples of one of the learned men of the time. Happily for them, this Pandit was a friend of their father, and under him they learned all of Tamil grammar there was to be known. Thus grounded, they could apply themselves to the critical study of Tamil versions of the Hindu holy books. Their home preparation for this work was ideal, for the father loved the classics, and long

before the time came for this study their gentle mother had entertained them by frequent repetitions of "the brave tales of old" in connection with their religion and sacred books.

This good father died at the comparatively early age of forty-seven, but before "the relinquishment of his body befell him" (as Krishna quaintly put it) he caused Krishna to undergo the ceremony of initiation, by which he became a full-fledged Brahmin. Also he arranged for his marriage with a child of his own sub-caste. After his death it was found that he had so arranged his family affairs as to preclude any possible trouble in regard to his property, a step that provided for every one without the injury of any.

Mr. Devendra Náth Dutt, in his *Sketches of Hindu Life*, describes fully the initiatory rites by which a Brahmin boy becomes one of the "twice-born," which is perhaps the most important function in his life. He says:

"Among the Brahminical priests of India there is one particular class who, in their authority and condition, bear a great resemblance to the bishops and pontiffs of the Catholic Church of Europe. These are the Goorus, a name signifying Master. They stand high above ordinary priests. One of their principal functions is the indoctrination of their flocks in the mystic rites and incantations. They rank as the first and most distinguished order of orthodox Hindu society. At stated intervals they make the circuit of their respective dioceses, examining into the conduct of the

26 CHILDREN OF THE LIGHT IN INDIA

inferior priests, and administering important rites in the temples. Except during these visitations they live in the retirement of some monastery near a temple, giving audience to numerous disciples. Nobody can be reinstated in his caste except through the ministrations of the Gooru."

Such, then, was the person ordained to initiate Krishna into the rites and mysteries that made him a true Brahmin.

From earliest days the son of a Brahmin is constantly having instilled into his mind who and what he is, and as he grows old enough he is taught to understand that one day he will be specially set apart by mystical rites to rank with his father amongst the highest in the land. Gradually he learns what that proud position means, and he looks forward to the time as keenly as a bridegroom to his wedding, for then does he not become the chosen one of heaven, through whom the gods dispense their favours amongst men?

Krishna's father was determined that nothing should be lacking to the great ceremony, and accordingly he added to it a further act known as the "sealing." Every Brahmin so sealed carries the marks of this act to his grave, and they are the indisputable proof to all that he is a special devotee—a token that he is a slave for evermore of the great Vishnu. Thus are assured to him the highest ecclesiastical honours and privileges Hinduism can offer. On his part he must never break

his fast without first properly performing certain daily ceremonies, and he must observe prescribed rites in every detail.

At the age of ten Krishna was called upon to face this ordeal. The investiture of the sacred thread and the accompanying whisper of sacred words intended only for his ear stirred the poetical soul of the child, but his sensitive spirit shrank when he beheld the officiating priest take a golden discus and make it red-hot in the sacred fire. When all was ready two strong men seized and held him firmly whilst the priest scored each shivering shoulder with the fiery discus. Burning tears fell, but the boy's pride of race came to his aid; no sound fell from his lips as the smell of burning flesh proclaimed him "twice-born of heaven" and chosen of the gods to be their servant for evermore. At the same time Krishna's father paid the priest to perform the same ceremony upon several other boys, an act of great merit in the eyes of priests and people.

Eight years of vigilant attention to his Bráhmínical duties and studies made Krishna a stalwart supporter of his faith. Unfortunately, he came across a few Christian students who he afterwards declared "disgraced the glorious Name of Christ," which made him despise them and the religion they represented, but beyond that he had little knowledge of Christianity up to this time. With his studies completed he was able to get a pro-

fessorship of Tamil in one of the colleges, and he took private pupils to coach in the language. One of these latter was a missionary for whom personally he soon felt affection and respect, but whose references to Christianity offended him.

Later he was drawn to consider the merits of Christ and to read the Bible. His first impression upon this reading was of its utter truthfulness and simplicity, in contradistinction to what he called "the inventions, baseless myths and garnished pleasantries" of the tales contained in his own holy books. As he continued reading, he was surprised to find himself losing the desire to perform the fasts and feasts and prayers which as a Bráhmín were his bounden duty to observe. Then the more he read the more he felt a consciousness of personal sin, to which he had been a perfect stranger hitherto, and which the prescribed atonements of Hinduism were powerless to meet. A great battle in his heart ensued, but he had not yet had dealings with Christ, so that his agitation only made him miserable. He then resolved to cast out of his mind all thought of a religion that was only a source of misery to him. He ceased reading the Bible, and avoided speaking to Christians of all sorts, except the missionary whose pandit he was, and to whose teaching he turned an obstinately deaf ear.

At this point in his career he was deeply wounded by his lifelong friend, a fellow-pandit,

confessing Christ; and to add to his grief his own brother, with some other young men, took the same step. The anguish he felt in his own soul he saw reflected in his mother's face and life, for night after night she wailed and mourned her younger son as if he were dead. The dreary days grew into weeks; life's daily duties alone kept the widowed mother alive, and she clung more than ever to the one son left to her. But with the passing of time Krishna felt a softening of his heart towards his old friend, and a longing for a renewal of the friendship which had been so sweet to them both through many years. Little by little they drew together again. Knowing Krishna's love for poetry, one day he brought him a copy of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan.

Taking it home, Krishna began to read it; the lure of the book kept him at it, and when he had finished it he started all over again. Along with the Gospel this book took its share in turning him to Christ. His friend was fast gaining religious experience, and with a truer conception of Gospel truth he was able to explain and remove certain difficulties as they arose in the course of their conversations. With a supreme effort of will Krishna now put away certain known sins which he felt stained his life, but this brought no solace to his uneasy mind, and what seemed like a hopeless struggle intervened. His friend then taught him to pray, and he earnestly sought by the way

of prayer to get liberation from the sin which had become such a burden to him.

One day the two friends talked long and earnestly, baring their hearts to one another. The character and mission of Christ became clearer, until a sudden light burst upon his mind, and he knew Jesus as his own Saviour, the only One who can cleanse and give peace to the heart of human-kind. He said, "That very day I knew the Lord Christ; that very day I learned to pray in His Name," and on that great day he wrote the first of his many Christian hymns in honour of the "Glorious Sea of Grace, bright Sun of Love, Whose radiance makes the darkness flee."

With a heart uplifted, Krishna Pillai was allied for evermore to all the best that earth or heaven can bestow; and his lips, touched with a heavenly fire, poured forth in song the riches of his poetic imagination to the glory of the Saviour he adored. In addition to this gracious gift he also prepared a Tamil version of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, adapted to the use of his own people, into which he infused the very life that Christ had poured into his own heart; to-day his hymns are sung and his *Pilgrim's Progress* is read by thousands who find in them inspiration and help.

Krishna Pillai had met Christ and made a full surrender, but there remained the painful duty of confessing Him before men, entailing the cruel duty of telling his aged widowed mother and his

young wife. During the first ecstasy of realizing Christ, these lay in the background. True, he no longer went to the temple or was seen performing the numerous religious duties he had been so punctilious about all his life. His shining face bore testimony with this neglect that something new had come into his life, and the two women grew suspicious. His wife found him at prayer without an idol and the usual accessories of Hindu worship, and he then knew the time had come when he must deal the blow which would for a second time break the happiness of his beloved home. He took his wife aside and strove to tell her something of the change and its cause. But she wept, and declared that if he persisted she would drown herself. All he could do at the moment was to comfort her as best he could. Hindu life in the home is bound up in a way no westerner can understand, and the grief at any sign of break-up is commensurate with the way in which family life has its hold on the people.

Krishna was persuaded to seek professional work in Madras, and to send for his family to come and live with him. This he did, and he received baptism about the same time. His summons to join him not being responded to, he returned to his people, and with eager heart he entered the family door. It is best to draw a veil over the agony of that tiny family when the truth was known, for Krishna had to face the bitterest

experience of his long life, in seeing the uncontrolled grief of the two women he loved best on earth. Time, the great healer, proved kind, for first the mother and later the wife gave their loyalty to the same Lord and found their peace at His feet.

God greatly used this consecrated life for the good of others, until in 1900 the call came and he was translated to higher service.

III

PANDITA RÁMABAI

ABOUT ten years before Rámabai was born a very hurried marriage took place, and it happened in this romantic way. A certain Hindu set out on a religious pilgrimage, taking with him his wife and two little daughters, aged nine and seven. At a holy place on the banks of the Godáveri River they spent three days, in order to visit the shrines and bathe in the sacred stream.

While performing his ablutions he noticed a handsome man engaged in the same manner, and, when their bathing and prayers were over, he approached the stranger and asked him from what place he had come. A conversation ensued, in the course of which the father, being much impressed with the stranger, offered his eldest daughter in marriage to him. During that day the hasty arrangements were concluded, and the next day the marriage took place. The morning following, the parents, with their remaining daughter, passed on their pilgrimage, leaving the nine-year-old bride to accompany her stranger-husband to his home, nearly nine hundred miles away.

Ānanda Shāstri was not only handsome in appearance and a scholar, but he was far ahead of his times in his ideas of women; so this child-bride soon found herself happily placed with one who was not only kind, but was determined to give her the best education possible. He realized that to live with one who could share his tastes would transform life for them both, and he soon set about teaching the willing child. But here he came against the blind wall of ignorance and custom in his own family, and he was made to understand that he must drop these new-fangled ideas or leave his home for ever. He chose the latter, and so the two fared forth into the world together.

The first day they came to a plateau in the forest of Gangamāl, on the slopes of the Western Ghāts, and without shelter of any kind they lay down to rest under the stars. It was not long before the silence of the night was pierced by the prolonged roar of a tiger, seeking its prey in the valley near by, and all night their peace was disturbed by the cries of wild animals. The child drew her blanket tighter round her and trembled all the night through, while Ānanda kept silent watch till morning came.

In this lonely spot they put up a temporary home, where Ānanda settled down to the teaching of his little wife. Being a Shāstri, the fame of his learning soon spread abroad, and high-caste young

men began to gather round him, eagerly making him their Gooru (teacher), and week by week the number of his disciples grew. Thus the days passed happily and peacefully. In due course a son and daughter were born and, as they grew, shared with their mother the generous education which Ánanda daily gave them.

On April 23, 1858, the third child was born, and she was called Rámabai, Giver of Delight. By that time Ánanda had so many disciples that the work of educating this little child almost entirely devolved on her mother. But the mother was kept busy with the entertainment of so many chelas (disciples), all of whom were made the guests of the house, that the early hours of the morning were almost the only time she could spare for teaching her little girl. Before dawn the girl would be gently awakened, and with the rising of the birds her daily lessons began. Pandita Rámabai in later years was fond of saying that her mother's lips were the only books she knew, a fact which speaks well for the excellent teaching Ánanda had given his wife.

But at last the day of trouble visited this happy family. So much hospitality had drawn for years on the private resources of the Bráhmín Gooru, and little by little his patrimony had to be sold to meet the debts incurred by such lavish generosity. Still Ánanda could not bring his mind to alter his course of life, for his religious beliefs were bound

up to such a degree with the idea of religious hospitality, that he felt he must continue it as long as he could. For a long time they had denied themselves a proper sufficiency of food, that they might clear themselves of debt, and when the day came for them to fare forth homeless once more, it was with constitutions weakened from lack of food.

Thus began seven years of wandering and pilgrimage for the little family, of suffering and in the end disaster. It was considered derogatory to the dignity of a Bráhmín in those days to work for a living, and this family was too proud to beg. As they went from place to place, visiting the temples and sacred shrines in many holy spots, they would sit in true pandit style and read aloud portions of the Sanskrit holy books to listening groups of worshippers, who would make an offering in return in money or food.

Being free now for devotion to his children, Ánanda taught them assiduously, and especially the smallest girl, whom he considered "a prodigy of learning." Marriages for the daughters could easily have been arranged, but the parents knew only too well that it would be the end of progress, and probably the beginning of great unhappiness. They preferred to keep their family with them and suffer together rather than be separated. Unfortunately, the income was very uncertain, and these were lean years.

Towards the end of this period of their pilgrimages famine conditions began to prevail, for rain had been scarce and the crops had died in the ground. Everywhere people were starving, and the parents, weakened by ill-feeding and toilsome travel, were unfitted to bear the hunger that high prices meant to such as they. When Rámabai was sixteen the double loss of her father and mother within six weeks, and later of her elder sister, left her and her brother alone in the world—homeless and poor. So great was their poverty at the death of the father that Bráhmíns could not be found to carry the poor man to the Hindu burning ghát. This was indeed a strange comment on all the generous hospitality dispensed through so many years and at such terrible cost.

At last two Bráhmíns were discovered who were willing to assist Rámabai and her brother in carrying the dead man to the cremation ground three miles away. When the ceremony was concluded, they turned away not only homeless but without a single friend to whom they could look for help. Then recommenced the wandering pilgrim life, during which they frequently suffered from hunger and need of proper shelter.

Three weary years passed away in this manner—bathing in sacred rivers, worshipping in temples, performing penances or reading aloud the sacred books, in return for such pitiful doles as

the pious listeners cared to give. These were years full of physical hardship, and of even greater suffering of the spirit; for the more closely they followed the prescribed rules of their religion, the greater became their spiritual hunger. More than four thousand miles were traversed in those years. They ate whatever food people gave them, or went without, as the case might be. Their wanderings took them from the south to far Kashmir, then east and back to Calcutta, journeys always done on foot and in hunger.

Wherever they went they spent much time in advocating female education, and by the time they arrived in Calcutta their fame had preceded them. As soon as it was realized that a fine Sanskrit scholar, even though a woman, had come to the city, the news created something of a sensation among the learned pandits. Rámabai was invited to meet the leaders of Sanskrit learning, who questioned her closely. When they found that she was not only a scholar, but was able to impart her knowledge intelligently, the pandits asked her to take up lectures to Hindu ladies on the duties of their sex as taught in the Shástras.

Rámabai now set herself to study critically and thoroughly the books of the Hindu law. She bought commentaries and other books to aid in her preparation for these lectures. So delighted were the leading Hindu pandits of Calcutta with

her extraordinary talents that they conferred upon her the title "Saraswati," thus showing they considered her worthy of bearing the name of the Hindu goddess of learning.

A close study of these sacred books brought doubts to the mind of Rámabai. In her own words: "What one book said was most righteous, the other book declared as being unrighteous. . . . This I found true of almost everything, but there were two things on which all these books were agreed: that women of high and low caste as a class were bad, very bad, worse than demons, as unholy as untruth."

This was entirely new to her, but the great insistence laid upon these opinions of women, together with the contradictory evidence of the sacred writings on various matters, distressed her mind. Only then did she realize that in no case did the Hindu religion hold out hope of any final goal of good for her sex. Rámabai records: "My eyes were being gradually opened. I was waking up to my own hopeless condition. I wanted something more than the Shástras could give me."

As a Bráhmin, religion to her had been the end and purpose of life in every act and every moment—the meticulous observance of the myriad rules and rites of Hinduism, which enter into the most trivial details and invade the most private affairs—these dominated her life. Rámabai found

comfort in study, but the day had arrived when her whole being rose up in rebellion against a system, sanctified by religion, which condemned half the race to a position of servitude in this life, granting no better future in any other life, even though a myriad lives be lived by the same soul. But such had been her upbringing and such her devotion to religion as she knew it, that later on, when light did come, she still found herself entangled in old Hindu ideas which took some years to cast off; and not until she had freed herself from them did she experience the peace which comes from full surrender to Christ.

The great Brámo-Samaj leader, Keshab Chandra Sen, was at this time living in Calcutta and, hearing of this famous Sanskrit scholar, he invited her and her brother to visit him in his own home. He and his family showed much kindness to Rámabai, and deeply interesting were their conversations on religion. The enlightened leader smiled when Rámabai replied to one of his questions: "It would be breaking the rules of religion if I studied the Vedas," meaning that a woman was not allowed by the Hindu religion to do so. But he urged her to read them and also the Upaníshads, which she at once proceeded to do.

Soon after this Rámabai lost her brother, by death after only a short illness. During those sad days the poor boy had no peace of mind, because he knew he must leave his sister defenceless, un-

protected, and unprovided for. Toward the last this anxiety so obsessed his mind that he gave expression to it in words. Rámabai replied: "There is no one but God to care for you and me," and he answered, characteristically: "Ah, then, if God cares for us I am afraid of nothing," and with this grain of comfort he passed beyond the veil to fuller knowledge, leaving Rámabai alone in the world. But she was not alone, for she had from that time forward a strange consciousness of Someone caring for her: "I felt His presence."

During her stay in Assam and Bengal she learned Bengali, and eventually married a Bengali gentleman, a graduate of Calcutta University. Neither of them knew Christ, and as both had lost their faith in Hinduism they were married by civil contract only. About a year later their little Manoráma, Heart's Joy, was born.

Among the books in her husband's home was a copy of Luke's Gospel, which Rámabai took and read with a hungry heart. It so stirred her that she told her husband that she would like to be a Christian. He had been educated in a mission school, and had read much of the Bible there; but when he heard his wife speak thus he strongly dissented; he could not join himself to such a despised sect, nor could he bring his proud mind to allow his wife to take that step. Rámabai always remembered this period of her life as one

of distressing and desperate spiritual need, but the time had not yet come when she could break with the old life, and launch out into an entirely new existence.

Nineteen months after marriage Rámabai became a widow, and once more alone, she, with her tiny baby, left Assam and came to Poona, where she recommenced the work of lecturing which she had dropped during her married life.

Rámabai now felt that her special mission in life must be the elevation of Indian womanhood. She founded a society for ladies in Poona known as the Árya Mahala, whose double object was to encourage female education and to discourage child marriage. Her eloquence moved people everywhere, and it was not long before branch societies were commenced all over the Bombay presidency. But all the while her own soul remained unsatisfied. She studied English and continued reading the Bible. Most happily at that time she received much help from the Rev. Nehemiah Goreh, who discussed with her many difficult problems, taught her something of comparative religion, and satisfied her mentally by pointing out wherein Christianity fulfilled the highest aspirations of every religion and of every needy heart. One of his argumentative books was specially written to convince her on doubtful points, and from an intellectual standpoint, at least, he succeeded beyond expectation.

He was a really great man and a great Christian, better known in a past generation than now, but remembered still as the father of Miss Ellen Lakshmi Goreh, the author of the beautiful hymn beginning: "In the secret of His Presence how my soul delights to hide! "

Born in Káshipur, near Jhánsi, he removed with his parents to Káshi (Benares), where he received a good Sanskrit education. He would not learn English, retained a strong faith in Hinduism, and despised Christianity. He admired the "doctrines of deep wisdom and the philosophy" of Hinduism, and undertook to refute Christianity, holding long discussions with Christian missionaries, and writing strongly against their religion.

To disprove Christianity, he needed to read the Bible. Christ's sermon on the mount made a deep impression on him, and the oftener he read it the more certain he became that no ordinary man could ever have spoken such words as these. Night and day his mind was haunted by the words; they pursued him and gave him no rest, until at last he went to see the missionary, and opened out his mind and feelings to him.

Suddenly he found his old ambitions vanished, his own religion fallen about him like a house of cards, and all the atmosphere filled with Christ. Immediately he told his friends. Many learned pandits sought to convince him of his error; but on March 14, 1848, he openly confessed Christ

by baptism, and his name was changed from Nílkantha to Nehemiah.

Five years afterwards his Bráhmín wife and daughter joined him. Some years later Mr. Goreh went to England as pandit to the Máháraja Duleep Singh, and he was formally presented to Queen Victoria. In 1876 he was again in England. High Church principles and ritual appealed to him, so he joined the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Becoming ordained, he started missionary work among his own people. He ceaselessly lived the Christ life, and strove by eloquent appeal and argumentative writing to convince Hindus that Christ is the fulfilment of all India's spiritual aspirations.

He died in 1895, at the age of seventy. Humble in spirit and modest, always living a life of poverty, continually using his brilliant powers in preaching, private conversations and the writing of books with one single purpose—that of bringing men to Christ—the devotion of this saint has hardly been surpassed in the annals of the Christian Church of India.

A great unrest possessed the spirit of Rámabai, and “the solemn movement of the soul Godward” gave her no peace. She determined to go to England, and in later days was wont to look back on this decision as in obedience to the divine call which at the time she only partially understood. The Sisters of St. Mary's Home at Want-

age received her upon her arrival in England. She stayed with them for some time, and the daily sight of Christianity operative for the uplift and help of others was an example to her of all she had deemed noblest in life.

She then went to London, where she saw much rescue work being done by the Sisters. She had read in the sacred books of Hinduism: "The king shall cause the fallen woman to be eaten by dogs on the outskirts of the town." But here she saw Christian ladies giving their lives to the rescue of these very women. She beheld the love and tenderness shown to these outcasts, and the marvellous way in which they were won back to pure lives, and were transformed by the power of Christ.

When she beheld these things she exclaimed: "Thus was my heart drawn to the religion of Christ."

She and her daughter desired and received baptism, on September 9, 1883. The following year Rámabai took the post of Sanskrit professor in the Ladies' College at Cheltenham, where she also pursued her own studies in various subjects. Two years later she and her daughter went to America.

America was full of interest to Rámabai. She was much attracted by the kindergarten method of teaching which she saw being worked out with marked success, and herself learned this system

of education, afterwards using it in an Indianized form in her own country. Wherever she went in America she received a warm welcome, and people sympathetically responded to her appeals on behalf of the work she was planning to do among her less fortunate sisters. Her speeches on the low status of women in India, and especially of the child-widows, touched their hearts and met with warm-hearted and practical generosity. From this time onwards much of the money for that side of her work came from America.

Rámabai travelled for two years, lecturing, until she had raised a sum of Rs. 60,000, an amount sufficient to justify her in embarking on her new enterprises; and in February, 1887, she landed once more in Bombay, and soon afterwards opened her Widows' Home. In the end of that year the Rámabai Association was started in America to help raise necessary funds for the carrying on of this work.

Very soon within the shelter of that Home were gathered the most pathetic creatures imaginable,—girls and women out of whose lives all hope seem to have departed. Rámabai thus describes some of the inmates of those early years:

“One married at five, a widow at six; another married when nine months old, and went to her husband's home when she was eight. To look into the sad eyes of some, to see a head branded with a hot iron, to see cheeks covered with small sores from pinching, all this

is sad enough, but it is *nothing* compared with the awful temptations to which they were exposed."

For eight years the life of Rámabai had been full of new experiences, of great plans and labour for the uplift of others. This period included her visits to England and America, and the starting of the work which made her so famous in later years, and was of such incalculable blessing to thousands of her country women through more than thirty years of her life. But Rámabai felt within herself some great lack, and she had no true peace of heart. She had accepted Christ, "but I had not *found* Christ," she declared, although her change of religion had brought her some happiness.

There still remained ingrained in her nature the old ideas of Hinduism. She could not divest her mind of the ancient teaching of her early days, and though intellectually convinced of the truth of the Christian faith, the full Light that lighteth every man had not streamed unimpeded over her soul; and nothing else could satisfy her intense nature. The old ideas clouded the pure message of the Gospel. She said:

"I thought that the rite of baptism was the means of conversion; that my sins were truly washed away when I was baptized in the name of Christ. These and such other ideas, which are akin to Hindu modes of religious thought, stuck to me. . . . I had failed to

see the need of placing my implicit faith in Christ. . . . I was desperate."

Her misery became unendurable. She was at grips with a task demanding more than the pleasant feeling first experienced when she became baptized, and she was being tossed to and fro by conflicting doctrines and ideas with no certain anchor, yet being assured in her own mind that there *was* something she had not yet got which would alter everything. Then came to her what must come to every truly seeking soul—the consciousness of deep guilt and sin with no witness of the Spirit to lift it from the heart. None can measure the hidden torments this great soul suffered through these days of drawing near to Him. In this time of her supreme need Christ laid His hand upon her, and for the first time she knew she must make unconditional surrender of her whole being to her Saviour; and she did it.

One who has lately made a great pilgrimage from the Bráhmó-Samaj to Christ (Mr. Chunilál Mukerji, baptized on December 3, 1922) speaks for himself when he says:

"Our knowledge of Christ, our intercourse with Him, commences in secret—in that severe solitariness where no outward help has any access. The Christian realizes his Lord in the wilderness of the Spirit."

Pandita Rámabai was in this way forced in

upon herself, and in the awful solitude of her own soul Christ met and healed her. Through her long life of succeeding service she never lost sight of Him, for she had met Christ never to be parted from Him in this world or the next. The burden of guilt which had so long oppressed her was swallowed up in the conscious joy of forgiveness. "I believed it, I received it, and was filled with joy."

The first fruits of this experience was in the complete falling away of all anxiety for the provision of her ever increasing family. It was Christ's work, and He would provide, and though—like Dr. Muller of Bristol—there were times when she was at the end of her resources, Rámabai's faith never wavered.

"We are not rich or great, but we are happy. . . . Having no banking account anywhere, no endowment, but altogether dependent on our Father God, we have nothing to fear. The Lord is our Inexhaustible Treasure."

What all this experience meant to Rámabai in her private life is best expressed by herself:

"What good news—for me a woman, a woman born in India, among Bráhmins who hold out no hope for me! . . . I had not to wait for countless millions of births and deaths, when I should become a Bráhmin man. . . . This everlasting life God gave freely to whosoever believes on His Son."

And thus came to Rámabai "the peace which passeth understanding."

It is impossible in a short sketch even to outline the life and work of Rámabai after her enlightenment. Her work had a threefold aspect. In March, 1889, she opened in Bombay the high school department of her work. This school was removed to Poona when bubonic plague made it necessary to save the lives of the children. "The Home of Wisdom," as this school was designated, was supported chiefly, perhaps entirely, by the generosity of American friends, and it was a work which grew to very large dimensions. Added to this was the Home of Refuge or Pity started for the help of women of unsheltered lives, and within its walls hundreds of unhappy souls were reclaimed and transformed, under the prayers and teaching of this wonderful woman.

Then there was "Mukti," or the Orphanage, for all in need of love and a home. This work was entirely supported by voluntary gifts; it included a school for the blind which was carried on under the close supervision of Rámabai herself. Famine times brought large additions to these three institutions, and in course of time many hundreds owed all of good they ever had to the time spent in them.

From the commencement of her work, Rámabai kept it unsectarian, and no undue pressure was

ever put on any inmate to become Christian. It was never Rámabai's policy to proselytize the women who sought a home under her care. They must voluntarily take that momentous step, and only after they had had vital experience of Christ. At one time of her life Rámabai was in much physical danger because of the great number of women who confessed Christ. The enmity and indignation of some Hindu friends of her enterprise became a serious menace to her safety, but in herself she showed such an attractive example of what a true Christian can be that the work progressed without hindrance.

In India, as in all other eastern countries, immense importance attaches to marriage and the gift of children, but in Hinduism they hold an abnormal place. The higher the caste the earlier must be the marriage ceremony. At the time when Rámabai began her work for the help of child-wives public opinion had not been awakened in their behalf to any great extent, although for a hundred years outstanding leaders such as Rája Rám Mohan Roy had raised their voices at least on behalf of the widows. A Hindu, writing of those times, says:

“A young man loses his first wife and straightway proceeds to marry another, probably a girl of ten or twelve. That girl dies, and another almost immediately takes her place, but she, too, dies and others follow. The man at last dies himself, leaving a wife in her

teens. I do not know how to characterize these cases except as cases of human sacrifice."

The lot of the child-wife may be judged by these words from the pen of Dr. Bhandarkár (once Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University): "Phulmani Dás, a girl of eight years of age was married to a man of thirty-eight. She died on the very night of her marriage." During "Baby Week" in 1926 the *Madras Daily Mail* had a snapshot of a little girl-mother eleven and a half years old holding a baby ten months old in her arms; and she had previously given birth to twins.

Rámabai, in a few pregnant words, describes the widows whom she sought to help. She had wandered on pilgrimage to all the holy places of India, and her knowledge came of her own experience. Speaking of Hindu priests she says:

"They send out hundreds of emissaries to look for young widows, and bring them by thousands to the sacred cities to rob them of their virtue and their money. They entice the poor ignorant women . . . and, after robbing them of their belongings, tempt them to yield to their unholy desires. They shut the helpless young widows in their large monasteries, hire them out to wicked men, and when the miserable slaves are no longer pleasing, they turn them out to suffer the horrible consequences of sin, and to die a death worse than that of a starved dog."

Rámabai knew that such poor creatures as these must be sought for, if they were to be

saved, and she set out to accomplish this task. Brindaban, the birthplace of the god Krishna, is full of temples, within which thousands of widows are housed. Dressed as a religious mendicant, Rámabai went to Brindaban accompanied by a friend. A Bráhmín priest met them and, taking them with him, put them into a dirty room, where they waited until morning. At dawn they joined the stream of bathers and went with them down to the river Jamna, but they shuddered to go into its foul waters. They remained for a fortnight in this place, until they began to be suspected, because they were never seen worshipping in the temples.

Rámabai found many widows starving to death, others committing suicide, and still others, in far greater numbers, she found sunk in the depths of immorality, out of which the priests told them they would secure happiness hereafter. Seven widows wished to accompany Rámabai when she was leaving, but, their secret being discovered, they were locked up and she saw them no more. Only one girl went to Mukti, and her escape nearly lost Rámabai her life, but eventually they did both get away in safety.

In all her work Rámabai was nobly assisted by her daughter, until Manoráma fell ill and died, a short time before her mother entered the life eternal.

Many books came from Rámabai's pen, one of

which was a life of Christ, of which more than 23,000 copies found their way into the homes of her country-women. Another book that made a great stir was *The High-Caste Hindu Woman*, and her translation of the entire Bible into simple Marathi, that the most ignorant could understand, was a great work.

Rámabai's sphere of influence extended far beyond the walls of the large institutions with which her name will always be associated. She travelled much, and was never forgotten in places she had visited. Men and women of her own and other races felt her power, admired her genius, and experienced her uplift of spirit in the very atmosphere she created wherever she went. Howard Walter, M.A., after a visit to Mukti, declared that she transcended all his highest anticipations. He said:

"She represents in her single personality the most remarkable combination of executive, intellectual and religious powers that I have known of in recent times in either man or woman. . . . She spoke seven languages fluently. . . . She learned both Hebrew and Greek to enable her to translate correctly the Bible into Marathi; and both the printing and lithographing are done by the women on the premises, with the result that any printing establishment might be proud of. . . . The great revival of 1905, when the fires of Mukti spread all over India—a new glow came into many a cold heart all round the world. . . . The praying band at Mukti rose from seventy to seven hundred, and

bands went out to many places to conduct evangelistic services, while the people coming to Mukti carried a blazing torch to other centres."

Leading Hindus like Mr. Nátarájan regarded Rámabai as "essentially an Indian personality," while Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, poet and in 1926 President of the National Congress, declared: "She was a great woman, a great saint, ancient in type but modern in manifestation of that type." Accepted by her fellow-Christians as the greatest spiritual woman-leader Indian Christianity has produced, she is also acclaimed by her non-Christian countrymen as one who was never unfaithful to the best traditions of her people.

In the rich and beautiful life of this devoted daughter of India, Christ the Saviour has been exalted and His pity and love made manifest. Rámabai still lives and speaks, and thousands of her sex bless God for His mercy in sending her into the world for their help.

IV

GOORU CHARAN BOSE

GOORU CHARAN BOSE belonged to an ancient and much respected family of Calcutta, who had settled in that city during the days of Mahommedan rule in India. At the age of six the father provided for the child a tutor, who grounded him well in elementary subjects until, when he was ten years old, he was considered fit to enter Hare's Anglo-Vernacular School.

Hare's School had become a household word in that part of Bengal. It had been founded and superintended by Mr. Hare, and all strict Hindus felt perfectly safe in sending their sons to him, because he was known never to take Christians as pupils. He was a sincere enthusiast in education, and did much to extend knowledge among the youth of lower Bengal, but he has been described as a man of no religion, who would not be trammelled by any system of faith whatever.

In this connection the story of how Lál Behári Dey sought to enter this school is interesting. He was attending the General Assembly's Institution, under the presidency of Dr. Duff, when his father's

death made it difficult to meet the cost of this education. Now it happened that Hare's School annually granted scholarships to bright boys for entrance into the Hindu College, and Lál Behári therefore applied to be admitted as a scholar to this school. After some conversation Mr. Hare remarked: "You read the New Testament; you are half a Christian, and will spoil my boys. I won't take any half-Christians into my school. No, you will spoil my boys," and the lad was turned away. But the day came when Lál Behári Dey thanked God that he had never entered Hare's school, for, returning to his former institution, he continued under Christian influence and was eventually converted and baptized. His life was henceforth devoted to the service of men, with such sacrifice as was worthy of the great Master who called him.

Entering Hare's School, Charan began the study of English along with his own Bengali vernacular, and for four years he remained a rigid Hindu, retaining his faith in idolatry and in the rites and ceremonies prescribed by his religion. Now, although religion of all kinds was excluded from the school curriculum, it is curious to note how with growing knowledge this boy came to a crisis in his life regarding a change of faith. The English education he was receiving gradually opened his eyes, until he began to perceive the folly of idol worship. This new light

shook his faith in Hinduism, which had at no point brought any satisfaction to a spiritual craving that was rising within him, he knew not how.

He was nearly fifteen then, and in pondering over the slow change taking place in his aspect towards religion, he became conscious that he had sins, was of a sinful nature. He realized that he possessed sinful propensities that fought hard for the mastery with conscience and reason. In Hinduism he knew nothing that could help him, and he felt control passing from him.

Later in life he said of that time:

“I stood in absolute need of power from God to effect the purification of my heart, the government of my passions, and the union and communion of my soul with Him. Karma [good works] are insisted on in Hinduism, but I found that I had not the power of performing good works.”

He gave up worshipping idols and joined himself to a debating society, whose members called themselves Theists, and who rejoiced in theological discussions but ignored any written revelation of God in any form. Although they aimed at intellectual, moral, and social improvement, they were bitterly opposed to Christianity and the Bible, and few of them knew anything of either. How under such circumstances Charan could retain a belief in one God, and look to Him as a

prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God is astonishing, but he relates how by daily prayer to Him, "I was gradually led into the truth."

He bought a Bible and assiduously studied it; he also made friends with some educated Indian converts and European missionaries; through them he received much help in his inquiries after truth. By the time he was eighteen he says: "I was fully convinced of the divine origin of Christianity. The Lord, in answer to my prayers, opened my eyes, and all doubt and unbelief were removed from my mind." His eastern mind was fully satisfied that the religion of Christ "was a perfect development of an ancient religion as old as the world itself," and that there was no foundation for the Hindu taunt that Christianity is a new religion as compared with Hinduism.

He now made it known, in his family and amongst his circle of friends, that he had decided to follow Christ, and to receive baptism as a sign and seal of his faith in the Saviour of men. When his relatives heard of this resolution they were alarmed beyond measure. They tried loving persuasion, and when that failed they sought every opportunity of carrying on a petty persecution. He was so narrowly watched that scarcely a movement escaped the lynx eye of one or another of his household. They seized his Bible and every other religious book he possessed, and burned them openly; and they strictly forbade him to visit any

more Christian friends or missionaries, threatening punishments if he disobeyed. But the fire of persecution only served to strengthen his faith in One whose voice he had distinctly heard calling him to take up his cross and follow Him.

Life in the old home becoming intolerable at last, Charan made up his mind to seek shelter elsewhere. So, taking counsel with a few friends, in September, 1842, he took refuge in the old Bishop's College, at Sheebpur. He had, according to Hindu custom, a child-wife, and when he was leaving home he confided in her and urged her to go with him; but she was ignorant and frightened, and did not understand why he should be a Christian, so she utterly refused to accompany him.

Arrived at Bishop's College, he believed himself safe from the annoyances and hindrances of the past months, and from any attempt on his life, which had been threatened. But it was a false sense of safety he cherished; his relatives were not willing to lose him so easily. Sitting studying his Bible one afternoon, he looked up to find his youngest brother standing before him. The boy informed him that his mother and several relatives were out on the river in a river-boat, having come to see how he fared.

Unsuspectingly, Charan rose to accompany his brother to the boat. No sooner had he taken his seat than his mother and friends surrounded him,

and with screams and cries they held him fast, striving to force him to relinquish the idea of becoming a Christian. They begged him to return home with them; otherwise, they threatened, he should never see Bishop's College again.

In desperation he turned his eyes hither and thither, looking for means of escape, and then to his horror he caught sight of a small fleet of open boats all around the budgerow filled with men carrying láthis, powerful long sticks. The tide was flowing in fast, and he felt himself firmly held, while the women continued their lamentations, and his mother, wild with grief and excitement, continued to beat her head on the floor and to entreat him to go back with her. In the midst of this commotion some one gave the order to get under way, and Charan felt the boat moving down stream towards Calcutta, still accompanied by the open boats, which he saw contained over a hundred men.

Divided between hopeless horror at the situation, a pitying affection for his mother and the strong pull at his heart towards his Saviour, Charan knew not what to do. He had long learned the power of prayer, and there went up from his heart the cry: "Blessed Jesus, uphold me by Thy Spirit, and deliver me from my troubles." Even as he prayed the answer was being granted, for there were those who were hurrying to his rescue.

Soon after he had left his room the college authorities got word of what was happening. One of the professors and a number of the college students at once followed in the college boat, and caught up with the budgerow and the open boats close to Garden Reach in the Hooghly. A real fight ensued, and a number on both sides were wounded, some badly so; but at last the láthiáls (hired men with sticks), becoming sick of the business, jumped overboard and swam for the shore.

When the people on the budgerow saw themselves deserted and undefended they turned in sudden fury on Charan, and said they would now kill him if he persisted in being a Christian. His cousin started beating him with a heavy cudgel and then, taking him bodily, threw him overboard to drown in mid-stream. The tide carried him straight for a boat riding at anchor; his head struck against the rudder. But he retained sufficient consciousness to seize and hold on to the rudder bands, where he was discovered by the college boat and conveyed safely back to Bishop's College.

Thus ended the attempt on his liberty and life. As soon as he was nursed well he returned to Calcutta, to be baptized where he had been born and brought up. A large assembly were drawn to the church to witness the confession of a high-caste young man who had suffered for his faith.

From this time he suffered no further persecution from his friends; indeed, quite the contrary. He had taken a step they could not undo, so wisely they made friends with him and treated him kindly. Yet they do not appear to have helped him financially when baptism and consequent separation from his family entailed the loss of his share of the property and wealth.

Before his confession Charan had been a teacher in Hare's School, but that post was now closed to him: "I was now obliged to resign the appointment, as I was strictly forbidden to teach or to preach to the boys." It was sad to be homeless and penniless, but Christian friends readily came to his help, and some even offered to find government employment for him, for which his position and education had well fitted him. But life's greatest blessings had come to him along spiritual lines, and he longed to give all to his Lord and to be poor for His sake. He chose to enter mission service and, as he records: "I spent the best part of my life teaching in a mission school and preaching in villages and the church." For nine years he prayed that his young wife should be won to join him, and this came to pass. In course of time she also confessed Christ and was baptized.

At the close of a life full of unselfish and devoted service he wrote:

"Nearly half a century ago, when I left home for

Christ, I was alone; I had none to share with me my joys and sorrows, I was persecuted right and left, I was thrown in the river to meet a watery grave. Yet when I cried the Lord heard me; 'out of the depths he delivered me.' I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord, because 'to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.'"

*" . . . If, impatient, thou let slip thy cross,
 Thou wilt not find it in this world again,
 Nor in another; here, and here alone,
 Is given thee to suffer for God's sake.
 In other worlds we shall more perfectly
 Serve Him and love Him, praise Him, work for Him,
 Grow near and nearer Him with all delight;
 But then we shall not any more be called
 To suffer, which is our appointment here.
 Measure thy life by loss instead of gain;
 Not by the wine drunk, but the wine poured forth;
 For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice;
 And whoso suffers most hath most to give."*

V

PROFESSOR RÁM CHANDRA

PROFESSOR RÁM CHANDRA was baptized at the age of thirty-one, and he naturally looked upon this event as by far the greatest in a life that was by no means uneventful. As a student he had been one of the most distinguished scholars in the old Delhi College, and on the completion of his education he was appointed professor of science in the Oriental Department of this college. For six years, in addition to his college work, he edited two vernacular periodicals, and translated several mathematical and other books, to help simplify the work for his and other students. Two years before his baptism he published a book, *Problems of Maxima and Minima*, which not only brought him recognition from the British government and an honorarium of two thousand rupees, but made his name famous in the universities of Europe.

During these years, like many highly educated Indians, he had become unmoored from his own religion and called himself a Deist, at the same time regarding with contempt all religions, including Christianity. But an apparently small thing

set him thinking. The English church at Pánipet, where he lived, was provided with a government chaplain to minister to the needs of European officials. A feeling of curiosity prompted Rám Chandra to attend a service there one Sunday, and to his astonishment he saw Europeans occupying high posts, whom he honoured for their sterling worth, taking part in the service with apparent devotion. He had looked to see a motley crowd of half-caste people with some inferior Europeans and a sprinkling of Indian Christians who knew English.

Thoughtfully turning homewards, he felt there must be more in Christianity than he had suspected. On his study table were copies of the Bible, the Gita and other sacred writings, and these he determined to study and compare at his leisure. This he did, and gradually he became convinced, and was eventually won to an allegiance to the truths of the Gospel, which surpassed anything he had conceived possible in religion. In his heart there and then there was born a love and devotion to Christ which would brook no delay in making open confession of the mighty change that had taken place within him.

Like every other high-caste man, especially of those days, he had to face the opposition of his family, caste and race, and he knew that he must leave all whom he loved most dearly upon earth. After a short, sharp struggle, in which he found

God's grace aboundingly sufficient for all these things, he made public confession of his faith by baptism in 1852, having literally left mother, home, wife and children to follow Christ.

His college work continued, but with this difference, that he gave all his spare time to earnest religious conversations with the cultured men of his acquaintance; these he longed to bring to the Lord who was now all in all to him. Only a small number of all the men he talked with ever publicly became Christians, but the attitude of mind of a great many was modified and even became favourable to Christianity.

In 1858, when the Sepoy Mutiny was at its height and not only Europeans but Christian Indians went in terror of their lives, Rám Chandra was in great danger and had to seek refuge with his Hindu brothers, who sheltered him as long as they could. When they became seriously suspected he had to steal away in disguise. After an exciting journey and several narrow escapes, he reached the British troops who were encamped outside Delhi, and he was safe. After the mutiny was over and the country was settling down he went to Rúrki, and then back again to a fresh post in Delhi, but in 1863 he received the appointment of tutor to His Highness the Mahárájá of Patiála, which he filled for five years.

Then, returning to Delhi, he prepared and published a book, on the *Differential and Integral*

Calculus, and also several controversial books on religious subjects. He was then recalled to Patiála to become Director of Public Instruction in the state, and upon the death of the Mahárájá he became tutor to his successor on the throne.

In 1879 Rám Chandra was seized with paralysis; he knew that his life's work was done. During the years of his service in high families his temptations had been manifold and hard to resist, but he had remained faithful to his Lord. His consistent life won the esteem of the great personages among whom he moved. During a lonely trying period from the time of his baptism to the time of his illness he continually commended the religion he professed. After a painful weary sickness he commended his soul to his Saviour, and passed to life eternal.

*"Great God! behold my reason lies
Adoring: yet my love would rise
On pinions not her own;
Faith shall direct her humble flight,
Through all the trackless seas of light,
To Thee, th' Eternal Fair, the Infinite Unknown."*

VI

GANGA DHOR SARRAOJI

FIRST ORISSA CONVERT

THE coming of the Gospel into Orissa is like a romance. The way of the Lord was made ready by a non-Christian Gooru, who constituted himself spiritual guide to large numbers of people around the city of Cuttack, drawn to him by his singular teaching and remarkable personality. In early manhood Sundra Dás had fought under one of the hill chiefs, but, wearying of a warrior's life, he entered on the rôle of Hindu reformer and teacher. Endowed with a fine mind, he was able to impress his opinions and will upon others, so that in course of time his satires on the gods filled people with contempt of the deities and the priests who ministered to them.

As time went on some Christian truth filtered through from places outside Orissa by means of tracts, later a catechism, and still later some Gospel portions and a New Testament in the vernacular. From these Sundra Dás taught himself and his ever increasing number of disciples the

Ten Commandments, which they made their law; the unity of God, which proved the folly of idolatry; and finally the doctrine that all men must worship God, and God alone.

Sundra Dás trained some of his followers to go abroad and teach these great truths to distant villages. Four of the men who did this work afterwards became Christians and true missionaries of the cross to their own people. The pitiful thing is that after all this preparation for the true Gospel, Sundra Dás himself fell back into Hinduism, and died declaring that the Christian Bible and religion were nothing but errors.

At the time of Ganga Dhor's birth there was not a single Christian in the whole of the province of Orissa, but the new teaching of Sundra Dás, the erstwhile warrior but now Gooru of all who would follow him, was calling men to a nobler life, and making them think seriously of the great matters of the soul. Among the people so affected was Ganga Dhor, who became a disciple and followed Sundra Dás.

With his old faith disturbed, there came into his hand a small tract about the worship of Jaganáth, whose name is woefully connected with the terrible Jaganáth car, under the wheels of which so many thousands of deluded victims gave their lives to please the hideous deity. The reading of this tract still further unsettled his mind as to idolatry, but later tracts that found their

way into Orissa by the hands of passing pilgrims, revealed Jesus as the Water of Life, and brought fresh enlightenment.

Perhaps the effect of these strange teachings stirred Ganga Dhor to a desire to go on pilgrimage; at any rate he decided to visit the temple of Jaganáth at Púri in the hope of receiving a vision from this god. The morning after his arrival at Púri he performed the necessary ceremonial ablutions, made his offerings and hastened to the shrine. Standing before the image, he devoutly joined his hands, and prayed that the god would that coming night visit him in a vision and show him his glory. When night came he fell asleep believing he would see a vision, but he slept heavily with the weariness of his journey and awoke to find himself disappointed.

Again he repaired to the shrine, and asked one of the attendant priests what he should do. The Pándah told him that the great lord was absorbed in meditation and needed to be aroused before he could answer the supplications of poor mortals upon this earth; he instructed Ganga Dhor to take strong measures, meaning that he should inflict upon himself some serious injury which might stir the god to pity. But Ganga Dhor had no mind to follow such advice. He had not followed Sundra Dás for nothing, although at the same time he wanted his curiosity to be satisfied and to behold the glory of the god.

The idea occurred to him that he might by a simple way stir the god to action. He procured a rod of iron, which he got well sharpened at one end, and next day he carried it hidden in the folds of his clothes to the shrine. As before, he went through the bathing and made his offerings, and once more stood in front of the image. He had chosen a time when few worshippers would be about, and no one suspected the man who had so humbly preferred his request and also consulted the Pándah so recently. Looking at the idol, he started reviling it as a preparation for the next thing; scanning the scattered worshippers and seeing that no one was watching, he gave some vicious plunges at the idol, then hiding his weapon again and joining his hands in the approved style he once more craved the same boon.

Satisfied that he had done all he could, he turned his back on the shrine, and when night came he lay down to sleep. The dawn awoke him, but neither dream nor vision had visited him. With a hardened heart he left Jaganáth in possession of the priests, and never visited Púri as a worshipper again.

He had paid that visit and made his request with the set purpose of settling for ever the question as to whether gods did hear and answer prayers. The little he had heard of Christian truth had raised doubts in his mind which he felt he had better settle once and for all, and hence he

had put the god's divinity to the test—and had found him wanting. When he thrust the iron into the image he was seized with the fear that he might be struck dead on the spot, but when nothing happened and he reflected that the earnest prayers added to the infliction and insults he had heaped on the god had failed, he knew for the first time that the god was powerless and could be no god at all. Before he went to Púri his mind had been perplexed as to whether Hinduism, which he understood, or Christianity, of which he knew little, could be the true religion. He had tested the former, and now he turned to the latter to see whither it led. He was a very intelligent man, and determined to find if he could a religion he felt he needed and could not live without. Sundra Dás and his teaching were good, but did not go far enough for him, so he made his way to the nearest mission station to seek first-hand for the knowledge he sought.

Thus began his serious inquiry into the truths of the Christian religion. He got a copy of the New Testament and read it again and again. Dr. Carey was still alive at the time, and Ganga Dhor was introduced to him as an inquirer who had renounced idolatry. The aged Doctor received him kindly and urged him in words he never forgot to hold fast to Christian truth.

“Dear brother,” said the Doctor, “take care

of the jewel which you have found and never let it go."

Not long after, Ganga Dhor made the supreme sacrifice of leaving all for Christ, and was baptized in his own town of Cuttack.

Like many other direct converts from non-Christian faiths, as soon as Ganga Dhor had openly confessed Christ he began to speak everywhere on behalf of his new Master, and for thirty-eight years he untiringly preached in house and church, in town and village. He was set apart as an evangelist soon after baptism—at a service which was the first of the kind ever held in Orissa. The fact that he was actually the first soul to come forth from Hinduism and sacrifice all for Christ in the country of Orissa was cause for deep exultation to the patient missionary who baptized him. He was looked upon as "the first stone taken from the temple of Jaganath," the promise of a mighty movement Godward, and the missionary rejoicingly added, "The chain of caste is broken in Orissa and will be mended no more for ever. Glory! Glory to God in the highest!" And from that moment Ganga Dhor, filled with a solemn belief that he had been called of God, began his great work of leading his countrymen into the light. He was pre-eminently gifted for the work to which he was called. Endowed with a fine voice, a persuasive and impressive manner, an accurate and extensive knowledge, and a wealth

of imagery peculiar to the east, his preaching often rose to the sublime. When speaking of Christ he always seemed to be inspired, and he held people spell-bound as he led them to visualize his own aspects of a Saviour whose power and love were continually manifested in his life and conduct.

He excelled in what is known in India as *bázár* preaching, which is simply preaching on the roadside to any who care to listen. Only those who have tried this method of evangelization know its difficulties. But Ganga Dhor could use his powers of sarcasm so as to draw and keep a crowd in good humour, and he could lead them on to listen breathlessly to the story of redeeming love.

In speaking of Christ's great sacrifice he would say: "Men of wisdom, tell me where you find such love, and I will sit and listen! Did any of our Hindu incarnations die to save another? Did any of our gods or goddesses? Where is such a history written? Ah! you cannot find it anywhere on earth; this is heavenly love. He who formed you has died in your stead. He who gave you life parted with His own to redeem you and give to you eternal life."

He did not forget his old Gooru, Sundra Dás. He strove to bring him into the light; but the Gooru was blinded by his own pride and never had any dealings with Christ. Ganga Dhor was

the first Christian convert in Orissa, and he worthily trod the way of the cross in the steps of his Master. Tens of thousands have followed his example since then, but he it was who first climbed the steep ascent to heaven, and showed men how they might conquer life and rise triumphant over death through the grace of our Redeemer and Lord, the Saviour of all mankind.

*"Rise up, O men of God!
Have done with lesser things;
Give heart and soul and mind and strength
To serve the King of kings.*

*"Rise up, O men of God!
His kingdom tarries long;
Bring in the day of brotherhood,
And end the night of wrong.*

*"Lift high the cross of Christ!
Tread where His feet have trod;
As brothers of the Son of Man
Rise up, O men of God!"*

VII

NARAYAN VÁMAN TILAK

MARATHI POET

EARLY in the sixties, probably about 1862, Narayan Váman Tilak was born in a Bráhmín family resident at the time in Karasgaon, in the Ratnagiri district of the Bombay Presidency. The family belonged to that section of Bráhmíns who have produced many great Indian leaders, and some fine Christian converts, such as Pandita Rámabai and the Rev. Nehemiah Goreh.

From infancy he drew in with his daily sustenance all that goes to make a true Hindu—religion, tradition and poetry. Fires of religious devotion lit his soul from the first, and very early he developed an intense love for poetry, and himself turned out some very creditable verses in his childhood. In later years he was wont to declare that it was “over the bridge of Tukarams’ verse” that he came to Christ. The country of his birth is one of peculiar beauty, full of fine scenery and tropical vegetation—a contrast to the burning plains

on the other side of the hills among which his home nestled.

His father was a government registrar who spent most of his time on long tours away from home. Thus the child was brought up under the care of his mother and maternal grandfather, in whose house he had been born. The father was a man of hard fibre, and although he had seventeen children he never developed any love for family life.

Being something of an astrologist, it was his custom to consult the stars at the birth of each succeeding child. For Narayan this turned out unfortunately, for it was found that he was born under evil stars, and it was foretold that he would one day leave the faith of his people, a prophecy which completely steeled the father's heart against him from the beginning. The child was persistently neglected, indeed scarcely noticed at all save to receive a rebuke or a blow.

This indifference being shown also to other children and even to his patient wife, as the boy Narayan grew in years and watched his father on his periodical visits home he began to understand something of his silent mother's sufferings. During her loneliness she had often found solace in writing poetry, some of which Narayan declared in after years was beautiful; but when the father returned home and discovered his wife's effusions he immediately tore them

up. After her death only one single verse was found remaining, of which Mr. Winslow gives the following translation:

*"See what a majesty pervades
This doll of rags and wood!
Instructress she of tender maids
In the arts of motherhood."*

When Narayan was eleven years old the final act of cruelty towards his mother was perpetuated. The father was away as usual, and feigning illness he sent for his wife. This was merely to test her faithfulness. The poor lady, whose health at the time was far from satisfactory, upon receiving the news immediately set out with five children to walk the forty miles to where her husband was. She found him quite well, but for her the fatigue was too great. Falling ill of a fever, she never rose again from her bed. As she lay dying, Narayan's determination was ripening; he would no longer stay with such a father, but would go into the world and carve out his own career.

His mother had been brought up under the mild guardianship of a father who loved his family and his gods. By nature she was very gentle, loving and religious. She was a great reader of books. In later years her famous son held her fine poetical gift in high esteem, and he deeply mourned the loss of her verses throughout his

lifetime. From her he learned to read and write, and doubtless it was from her he inherited his marvellous poetical gift. A great devotion filled the heart of Narayan for his unfortunate mother, and all his life he maintained that she was as near perfection as a living soul could be.

In the home of his maternal grandfather Narayan had first seen the light. Among the influences that moulded his character this old man held an important place. Like many Hindus, towards the end of his life the grandfather withdrew from earthly affairs and gave himself up to a religious life. He would sit for hours repeating the name of his god, Narayan, and because he loved the little lad who hung about him every day, he called the child by the name of his god. They would go together to the woods and spend hours in singing hymns, or when the child was tired they would play simple games. This gentle old man, uplifted by the best in his religion, and with a tender love for little children, passed on these characteristics to his grandson.

The child's character was being formed under the triple influence of the three chief persons about him—his father, his mother and his grandfather. With little love for his father, he learned to hate the unworthy conduct which made his home so unhappy, and yet from him he probably inherited the erratic strain which showed itself in after years. Certainly from his mother and

grandfather came his reverence for religion, his love for children and his great poetical gift.

The eleven-year-old boy was present when his beloved mother breathed her last. Dutifully he did all that was expected of him on that occasion, and later he accompanied his father when the ashes after the cremation were carried to the source of the Godávery River, where the two mourners cast all that was left of her whom the boy loved. That very day Narayan turned his back upon his father. Returning to Nasik, he sat down to think what he should do.

While bathing in the river, he met a youth with whom he made friends, and his boy's mother offered a temporary home to the orphaned boy. The family was not well off and could ill afford to provide sufficient light after dark for Narayan to pursue his studies. At dusk, then, the lad would steal out with his book, and seek the shelter of the temple, where by its light he could work far into the night. During these difficult days he made the acquaintance of a famous Vedic scholar named Ganesh Sástri Lele, to whom he always reckoned he owed a debt similar to the one he owed to his own excellent mother for the teaching she gave him.

Some time after he had settled with this family, his father sent the remaining four children to Narayan for him to take care of, and according to his nature he made very poor pecuniary

arrangements for them. It soon became apparent to Narayan that his own education would be hampered by his enforced family responsibilities, but he faced the fact bravely and determined to do his best—which he loyally did at his own cost. The headmaster of a certain school, admiring the boy and recognizing his brilliant abilities, made him a free scholar until he had reached the sixth form. All this time Narayan spent his spare time in writing verse, many of which were accepted as real poetry, and both now and all through his life he astonished his friends by the rapidity with which he wrote his poems.

Thus passed seven important years of his life. He found his chief delight in books, and loved retirement from the rush of life. It was because of this that his friends began to fear he might become a recluse, and so be unfitted to take upon himself the responsibilities of a householder. They therefore began to worry him to marry, and they made choice of a child of their own sub-caste of whom he had some knowledge. After some trouble the marriage was arranged, and soon afterwards took place. As the little bride was only eleven years old, Narayan left her with her parents. Except for brief visits his life for the next ten years was a vagrant one. The wandering strain was in his blood, and his restless spirit was forever in search of truth.

From a child various streams of influence

flowed into his receptive mind and helped to mould his character, eventually developing within him that passion for truth with freedom to practice it, coupled with a deep devotion to his country, which became the two ruling passions of his life.

In his grandfather's house a simple faith exhibited daily to him all that was best in Hinduism. Instead of the hard and strict orthodoxy of his father, the boy was reared in a free atmosphere, where he learned that God longs for the love of every human heart, and that He hears men's prayers. If his mother knew of Christ she never spoke of Him, but her teaching was pure, and so was her life.

These years made their indelible impress on the boy, so that when at eleven years of age he adventured forth to hew out his own life, he bore in his heart a passionate love for freedom which dominated his outlook on religion. He detested the intolerance of Bráhminism with its hidebound orthodoxy. He abhorred caste, which separated men and made brotherhood impossible, and he hated idolatry, which degraded things of the spirit and kept men in bondage to ignorance and fear.

Even as early as fourteen years of age, he showed his strong feelings by declining to obey the Bráhmins' rule in the annual observance of the anniversary of his mother's death. The

priests, who benefited by these ceremonies, were so enraged that they declined to perform any religious ceremonies whatever for him; but, being a Bráhmín, he did without their assistance and continued in his own way.

In his school days one of his teachers did much to fan the flame of patriotism within his heart. Love for his country became a passion with him; he earnestly desired for her religious and political freedom, that she might rise, as he believed she could, to be a united nation, and take her place in the front rank, standing for truth, liberty and righteousness. India's political broils and bondage in various directions distressed him, but even greater was his grief over "her moral and spiritual slavery," as he termed it.

In his own struggles after freedom he began to realize his inability to help others to a similar state. He knew his country was capable of noble things, but how to realize them he knew not. At the age of twenty his spirit was so oppressed with these weighty matters that he determined to give himself to a life of asceticism, by means of which he hoped for enlightenment, for he saw no avenue of escape for his country save through religion.

Tilak's heart and, he believed, his country were religious to the core, but he soon became convinced that true freedom could not emerge from Hinduism as he knew it. There then came

to his mind the idea that he himself was called to lead out his country to freedom, and that, by way of religion—he must start a new and pure religion that should draw men by its very purity. And so he withdrew himself from human society and began the practice of Yoga, that terrible discipline of spiritual exercises and austerities which Indians for countless ages have practiced in the name of religion. All day he sat on a mountain top unsheltered from the rays of the scorching sun and unprotected at night from the cold winds. He ate the wild fruits and roots of the jungle, and meditated and prayed and read his Hindu holy books.

Weeks grew into months, until at last it became known that a saint was enduring all these things. Credulous villagers began to flock round him, many imploring him to heal their sick and to help them. Some cures were reported, and more people came, for even to behold one so holy conferred blessing.

Two years of this sort of thing brought disillusionment. Tilak made the bitter discovery that not what he was, but what people believed he conferred, was what they desired. His mind was suddenly made up. He must “lose his own soul” if he wanted to obtain his heart’s desires: “My mission can prosper only if I can be lost in the teaching I give.” And Tilak descended from the mountain with a new resolve in his

heart, which he would never let go until he was satisfied. His two years of austerities had developed his mind, and broadened his experience, but not yet had he learned the true pathway to his own and India's freedom.

As his wife grew older Tilak paid visits to her at her father's house, and in course of time a son and daughter were born, but both of them died. Then a third child was born, and he resolved to take his wife and little son to live with him.

About this time a wealthy gentleman and scholar invited Tilak to join him in bringing out an edition of certain Sanskrit religious books in the vernacular of the people. He accepted the work, and brought his wife and son to the home provided for their reception by his kind patron. They settled down happily, and he began on the work by making a careful study of the books in Sanskrit he was to translate. He spent whole days in the private library to which he had free access, and these were very happy months for the little family. His learning was by this time recognized, and ever increasing numbers of people read with delight the poems that flowed so easily from his pen.

His researches in Sanskrit literature during this period gave him much food for thought. He found no sure foothold in its philosophies and speculative theories. When he began on the

translation work he was impressed with the fact that when put into everyday language much of this sacred literature lost its meaning and became commonplace. He had to admit that a "mantra" chanted in Sanskrit was a very different thing from what it was when chanted in Marathi. "Chanted in the vernacular, people will ridicule it," he said, and he saw no way out of the difficulty.

In 1892 Tilak's patron desired him to bring out a new monthly on religion and philosophy. The first two numbers appeared, and then it became apparent that the religious views of the two men differed so seriously that the engagement had to terminate. Almost at once, however, he obtained a fresh post under the Rájá of Rájnandgaon.

During all these years of change and doubt Tilak had never taken any account of Christ:

"I never thought of the Bible or Christ, for the reason that the Bible is so simple a book . . . and one reason I never investigated Christianity was that no preacher had ever spoken to me about Christ. . . . We Bráhmíns are by nature a people who have the ability of enjoying and admiring such literature as is beyond our comprehension, or that puzzles us."

And so the very simplicity of the Gospel was its stumbling-block.

Tilak needed to take a rail journey of some

hundred and seventy miles to his new sphere, and according to his custom he carried with him a Sanskrit book to read. His fellow-passenger possessed a good knowledge of that language, and when he saw Tilak was reading Sanskrit he drew him into conversation. After hearing some of his opinions the stranger urged him to read carefully the life of Jesus, and presented him with a copy of the New Testament. The promise was readily made. Then the two men prayed together and parted, never to meet again.

Tilak never knew who the stranger was, but he kept his promise and, pencil in hand—according to his custom—he started to read the Gospel of Matthew.

“When I reached the Sermon on the Mount I could not tear myself away from those burning words of love and tenderness and truth. In these three chapters I found answers to the most abstruse problems of Hindu philosophy. It amazed me to see how here the most profound problems were completely solved. I went on, eagerly reading to the last page, that I might learn more of Christ.”

Thus was Tilak captured by the personality and teaching of Jesus, and became intellectually convinced that Christianity is the true religion. But, like many who are called Christians, the glorious experience of realizing the power of Christ in his own soul had yet to come, and it came in a simple and very effective way.

Among a bundle of tracts which had been given him by a Christian superintendent of police he discovered one, Bushnell's *Character of Jesus*, which filled his heart with an intense longing to know Him of whom it spoke. Christ had said, "Ask and it shall be given unto you," and he took the command literally and prayed for fuller enlightenment. But, in terrible anxiety lest he might not be heard, he added: "If my petitions are not granted, I will reject the doctrine that God answers prayer." He was humbled a day or two later when the very books he needed to help him at this crisis were discovered by him in a box among some rubbish in the office where he was working. With the aid of these books, and of a friendship he made about this time with some good Christian people, he was immensely helped, and he felt his prayer had been most fully answered.

Thus had he been led until he was able to say: "I was a true Christian at heart. . . . I experienced a peculiar fellowship with Him. This much I know, that I could not be happy if I missed Him."

Narayan Váman Tilak had found Christ. His open confession was made by baptism on February 19, 1895, just two years after he had met the European stranger in the train. His heart was at rest, for in Christ he found freedom. Through Christ he now saw the open road to

liberty for himself and for his beloved country. Henceforth his whole life should be an offering to his Lord.

Dismay and grief seized on his relatives when Tilak took the decisive step of baptism, which necessarily separated him from them all. Attempts were made to take his life. Poisoned food was offered to him—which he neglected to eat, but of which an animal partaking died. Again, on the banks of a river some young men one day approached him armed with sticks, and told him they had come to punish him for giving up his religion. But the sound of horses' hoofs caused them to take flight, and Tilak was delivered from their hands.

But the real sorrow came from the opposition of his wife. Through five bitter years he was a stranger to his own family. Several times his wife sought to destroy herself by drowning. She wrote, pleading with him to return to his own faith, and eventually she fell ill, of sheer longing for the man she held so dear. "She will die for love, but will not follow Christ for love," poor Tilak said. Every effort was made to win him back, but finally she agreed to come and live in the same place though in a different house. By this time she herself began to show some leanings towards the new faith. In 1900, without any apparent reason, Mrs. Tilak made a complete surrender to Christ, and in proof of her

faith she immediately adopted two outcast children, and added them to her own family.

The full significance of this action can be best understood in India, where the very shadow of an outcaste brings pollution. In some parts of India to-day such people are swept from the public roads when high-caste people are walking there, yet such were the children adopted by Mrs. Tilak, a Bráhmín of the Bráhmíns. How better could she illustrate the mighty change wrought by Christ in her heart? From that day onward she was the faithful helper and counsellor of her husband, and much of his best work owed its inspiration to this splendid woman.

For twenty-four years Narayan Váman Tilak gave of his best to his country, his Church and his Lord in a hundred ways. His kind heart won for him the devotion of all who were in trouble. Little children were drawn to him as by a magnet. Wealth and worldly ambition were of no value to him. His Master Christ was a poor man, and to be like Him was his only ambition.

Highly gifted in many ways and supremely so in some regards, wealth, fame, position and much that the world holds precious were at his command; but instead of seizing them he poured his treasure store at the feet of Christ day by day, until he was called to share His glory above as he had shared His poverty below.

For many months before the end Narayan

suffered much in body, but never for a moment did he lose his glowing faith. He knew whom he had believed. Death was simply transition from one state to a more blessed one, and all was perfect joy. His own words at this time were: "Blessed, doubly blessed is all this pain. . . . Blessed, thrice blessed is this sickness; it is perfect union with Christ."

Full satisfaction for him was to awake in the likeness of Christ. "I shall not die, but live," he declared. On May 9, 1919, he left the world richer by far for his having lived in it. The next day his friends carried what was mortal of Narayan Váman Tilak with songs of triumph to the cremation ground, singing the very hymns he had written for them when he was among them.

Tilak's labour was one of love, love for Christ and for his fellow-men. By faith he laid hold of Christ, he lived a life of true joy, and he died a triumphant death. With a sensitive nature and a deep passion for humanity, he gave utterance in beautiful language to the thoughts and hopes of myriads who themselves could not express their ideas. In him the dreamy poet and the mystic continually aspired after God, and his poems remain to his people as the noble expression of all he believed and hoped for in this life and the next.

By becoming a Christian, Narayan Váman

Tilak would never allow himself to be cut off from the friendship of his non-Christian countrymen. To the end of his life he retained their friendship, confidence and admiration, and his best poetry was likened by them to their own famous *Bhagavadgita*. Within the Christian Church Tilak led men to a right attitude toward their own country, helped them to a wholesome self-respect, and constantly laboured to lead them from sin to freedom in Christ Jesus.

His gifts were consecrated to Christ, and his sweet verses remain as springs in a dry place for generations to come. Long after those who knew him have passed away the strains of his music will lead men up to the very throne of God, filling them with something of the ecstatic love that fired his own soul and made him the really great Christian poet that he was. These are his own words:

“ O Brother, on my shoulder rest Thy hand—
And fearless waits my soul;
O Way, erect on Thee I take my stand—
And radiant gleams my goal;
O Truth, within the warmth of Thine embrace,
All doubts dissolving die;
O Life, before the sunshine of Thy face,
Death perisheth—not I!”

VIII

VENKAYYA

IF with all your hearts ye truly seek me, ye shall ever surely find me," are words fully verified in the history of the Telugu convert, Venkayya. It is amazing how God works out His purposes for the seeking soul and causes the seed sown in weakness to grow up we know not how. Many a time in the writer's experience women have carried back from the city to their distant village some small portion of Gospel truth, sometimes remarking: "I cannot read it, but my son will read it for me," or: "Is it about Jesus? Ah! I know that name, for a white man once came to our village and told us of One he called Jesus who could save poor women like us; yes, I'll take a copy, too, for it is good to hear about Him." And the case of Venkayya leaves room to hope that even such women may have found Christ.

Venkayya was forty-seven years of age when he first heard that an idol is no god at all. He was worshipping in the temple of his native place, and standing before the image of a god whose supreme function was to give deliverance

to his worshippers from all sorts of temporal calamity. He had just proffered his request to the god, and was making ready for departure, when a Hindu friend standing near remarked that he had ceased to believe in such gods, since he had heard a Christian Gooru declare that gods are only the work of men's hands.

His friend continued: "It is true, that the carpenter or the stonemason makes them, and the painter paints them; and although they have eyes, they cannot see; ears, but cannot hear; and hands that can never lift the burden for one moment from our shoulders or our hearts." This and much more the Hindu friend explained to Venkayya, adding that somewhere there must be a real God, and he was seeking and waiting for Him. The Gooru had said that He dwelt in temples not made with hands.

Venkayya listened, at first with horror that such words should be spoken in the presence of the god he had worshipped all his life; but as his friend proceeded the argument seemed so clear, so true, that he went his way lost in thought. As he trudged home the cry arose from his heart: "O Great God, who art Thou? Where art Thou? Show Thyself to me!" But in those regions there was no Christian teacher, nor even a Christian of any sort, to show him what to do or to assure him that Jesus was indeed the Saviour of men.

Days grew into months and months into years, while the daily cry went up, "O Great God, show Thyself to me!" and an almost hopeless struggle intervened. Occasionally people travelling from other parts brought reports that certain white missionaries were preaching about a God who loved men, and had sent His only Son into the world to save them from their sins.

One day he saw a circle of the villagers, sitting listening to a man who was reading something aloud. He came near and joined them. The reader held in his hand a much soiled tract that had been handed on to him by a friend from another village, and from what he heard Venkayya knew that this was about the very God he had been invoking for so long. He listened feverishly to every word, and at the end he turned homewards with a new prayer on his lips: "O Great God, the Saviour! Show Thyself to me!"

This prayer he continued to pray, and then one day a friend came back from a journey and told him that he had been at a Christian funeral. He explained that in spite of the weeping and mourning, he was surprised to hear, when the service was over and the grave being filled up, that the mourners comforted each other by saying: "He has only gone before us; we shall meet him again at the feet of the Lord."

Venkayya pondered over this wonderful religion

that could hold out such a hope as this, and he longed in his heart for some one who could tell him more. His prayers were but very partially answered for a time, but he could not let go the small bit of hope that had come to him; and so he prayed on. After three years of alternating hopes and fears he heard that twenty-eight miles away, at Bezwáda, there were missionaries preaching about this God whose only Son had once lived upon earth, and immediately his mind was made up. He would go, staff in hand, and walk to Bezwáda to discover the secret he had waited so long to know.

It was the annual Hindu festival called Shiva Rátri, when many thousands would gather to bathe and worship. On all the roads leading into the city crowds of men and women were passing day and night in order to be present. When he reached the city, tired and hungry though he was, he made his way to the bank of the river, and sat down to watch the bathers crowding into the stream. And then the most wonderful answer was vouchsafed to his long unanswered prayer. Looking at the bathing host, he said to himself: "This water cannot cleanse sin," and at that moment a Bráhmin priest came to him and asked: "Are you going to bathe?"

Thinking that the priest wished to assist him to say the right prayers according to Hindu custom, he replied: "No, sir; do I require to bathe

here? ” He continued: “ The water to-day is unclean, with so many people bathing; they are stirring up the mud so that even my body would not be washed, so how can my soul be cleansed with such water? ”

The astonished priest looked down on Venkayya, and he said: “ Are you a Christian? ”

“ No, sir,” replied he, “ but I wish to be.” The priest, stooping down to him, whispered: “ I will tell you of one who will help you to be a Christian. Go to the house on yonder hill, for there a Christian Gooru lives, and he will tell you what to do,” and with these words the kindly priest hurried away, leaving the amazed man full of wonder and joy.

Meanwhile others from the same village who, younger and less weary than he, had come across the missionary preaching to a great crowd about Jesus. When they heard what he was saying they at once said: “ Here is the man who will tell Venkayya all about the God he is always praying to,” and they sought him out by the river and told him. When he heard this he silently prayed: “ O Great God the Saviour, show us the Gooru.” Rising up, he answered: “ Come, let us go at once to the Christian Gooru,” and they all made their way to the bungalow on the hill together.

Sitting down outside the house to await the return of the missionary, Venkayya bent his head

to his knees and kept repeating the prayer: "Show us the Gooru," but no one heard or knew what he was saying. The missionary at length came home from his city-preaching, and kindly inquired what the little group of men wanted to see him for. Venkayya rose up and, with outstretched arms, said: "O Gooru, we have come to see you, wishing to know about God. Please tell us who He is, and tell us about Jesus. My friends heard you preaching, but I was not there, and I want to hear also."

With a full heart the missionary there and then told them the story of redeeming love, and when he had finished Venkayya again rose to his feet and, crossing his arms upon his breast, with deep feeling he looked up and said: "This is my God; this is my Saviour. I have long been seeking Him, and now I have found Him. He is my Saviour, I will serve Him."

The village folk and their new Gooru spent some hours in talk and prayer, and when the time came to part he promised to visit them in their own place very soon. Three days later he reached the village, where Venkayya and his friends gave him a warm welcome. The missionary's tent was pitched under some trees near the village, and for several days an increasing number gathered round the tent door to hear the glad news. The Bráhmíns and priests of the place were very indignant, threatened

both the people and the missionary, and laid a complaint before the local magistrate that their religion was being disturbed in an unlawful way.

The day for Venkayya's baptism was fixed, and he, his wife, five children, and sixteen men of the village all received baptism at the same time. Just as the last man was being baptized a woman's screams rent the air; this newly-made Christian cried out: "Stop her! She is on the way to the well to drown herself." It was his wife. She was saved from suicide, and later gave herself to the Saviour and joined her husband.

Venkayya was no sooner baptized than he began to preach to others and exhort them to find peace as he had done. In his own village and all the surrounding villages he ceaselessly preached Christ, and he also gave a piece of land for a church. A school was started in the village, and until the church was ready services and prayer-meetings were held in it.

Occasionally Venkayya suffered for his loyalty to his Lord. On one occasion he was almost killed by being felled to the ground with a heavy blow on the back of his head.

At the time of his death there were in his village and in the other villages where he had worked nearly three thousand Christians. Like a shock of corn fully ripe he was gathered to rest on September 19, 1891.

IX

IMÁD-UD-DÍN

THE Christian world is slowly awakening to the fact that it is doing very little towards bringing to a knowledge of Christ the vast hosts confessing Mahommedanism. Statistics show pitifully small numbers of men and women whose lives are given to this most difficult but most necessary and glorious work. A great militant religion which seeks to proselytize wherever it can, and by force if other ways fail, has established itself almost wherever it has gone, and in the course of the centuries has swept and spread itself over great portions of the world.

The case of Imád-ud-dín shows all too plainly how hard it is for a Moslem to find Christ, and is proof of the crying necessity for men of learning and an unflagging faith to honour their Master by giving their lives to this noble work. Pride of race was added to pride of faith in Imád-ud-dín, for he was a direct descendant of the Moslem saint Qutub Jamál, who in his turn was descended from the royal house of Persia. Imád was proud that he could give the names in

genealogical order of his forefathers for thirty generations back, and could boast that among them were some of the great champions of Islám.

He was born at Pánipat, not far from Delhi, in 1830, the youngest of four brothers. At the age of fifteen he left home to join his elder brother at Ágra to study under his tuition. His object in giving himself to study for many years was, as he often said, "to find my Lord," so after study hours he spent all his leisure in visiting the faqírs and pious learned leaders of his faith, hoping to learn from them how to attain his object. His time was filled up with the study of Moslem law, the Qurán and commentaries upon it, traditional writings, philosophy and logic.

He knew nothing of the Christian religion, but he came across professing Christians whose conversations about religion caused some doubts to arise in his mind with regard to his own faith. These doubts he stated to some of the learned Maulvis, who, instead of trying to clear them away, taunted him and even cursed him so bitterly for daring to question the faith, that he never dared again to speak to his co-religionists of what he felt and feared. He had a sincere friend in the person of the deputy-inspector of schools, who knew he entertained these doubts, and he urged strongly that Imád should have nothing further to do with the literatures of other religions or with their professors, but should give

himself strictly to the study of Islám under the direction of erudite scholars and saints.

Following the advice of this friend, Imád made notes of his difficulties and doubts and presented them to Maulvi Abd-ul-Halím, a learned Mahomedan preacher belonging to the retinue of the Nawáb of Bánda, but his reception was so harsh and imperious, and he received so little satisfaction, that from this time onward he put aside all ideas of controversy, and simply gave himself to continuous study. Believing that the time he spent in searching his sacred books was time given to God, he spared no effort or time in this pursuit. For the next ten years he read, most of his days and often far into the night. During this long period no problems were solved, no doubts cleared away, but his inquiry did serve to fill him with impatience and bigotry towards other religions.

He believed that he had done all that was possible in his search after truth, but his heart remained unsatisfied. Old fears would disturb his mind, and peace was far from him. All the outward rites he well understood and punctiliously performed, but when he consulted the leaders of his faith they assured him that he had barely touched the fringes of his religion. If he would reach the high point he aimed at, he must become fully versed in the secret science and mysteries of Islám. He must consort with faqírs and saints

and serve them for years, then he might hope to have handed on to him the "fruit of life" which is the rare gift of God to believers.

In describing how seekers after such divine knowledge try to attain it Imád once remarked:

"If only they had had the writings of the prophets and apostles, they would have found out the true knowledge of God, but Mahommed forbade his followers to read the Bible; and according to his view he did well, for he knew that if ever anyone read the Holy Word of God he would never want the Qurán any more."

But these words he wrote when he had given himself to Christ, and had learned to love the Bible beyond any other book in the world.

Following the advice given him, Imád now set himself to practise various austerities, such as "speaking little, eating little, living apart from men, afflicting the body, keeping awake at night, performing all that the secret science of religion demanded, repeating the Qurán, undergoing penances, and performing devotions," these latter not five, but many times a day. He sat on the graves of saints in contemplation, hoping for some fresh revelation thereby, or at the feet of teachers of the Qurán, to listen to their disquisitions; and he even visited half-intoxicated fanatics in the hope that he might thus gain union with God. He declared that through all that time, "I submitted

and suffered to the last degree, but nothing was made manifest to me after all, except that it was all deceit.”

Imád was now appointed to preach in the large royal mosque in Ágra, and there to expound the commentaries and traditions of the faith, and this he did for three years. But all the time one verse in the Qurán troubled him, and no explanation he ever heard could lift the horror he felt of it. He says:

“All the time my heart was pierced as by a thorn with the words, ‘Every mortal must necessarily go to hell; it is obligatory on God to send all men once to hell, and afterwards He may pardon whom He will.’”

His only comfort he found in acts of worship, and he made a practise of retiring daily to his room for private prayer, which was often accompanied with the shedding of many tears as he besought pardon for his sins.

Finding no abiding peace from all these efforts, he left the world and wandered in a faqír’s robe without change of raiment through jungles and from city to city, covering in this way more than twenty-five hundred miles. In looking back upon this experience Imád observes: “Faith in the Mahommedan religion will never allow true sincerity to be produced in the nature of man, yet I was then in search only of God.”

He possessed a book on mysticism and devo-

tion which he loved more than anything else and followed more closely as his religious guide, and on this long tramp it was his daily help and comfort. At night he slept with it at his side, and often during the day in moments of perplexity he found solace in clasping this book to his heart. After his conversion he said: "This priceless book is even now lying useless on a shelf in my house." During all that journey he carried out its instructions often painfully. Here is one of many such that he did:

He wrote the name of God on paper 125,000 times, and cutting out each name separately he rolled it up into a small ball with flour, and threw each ball into a river to feed the fishes. Half the night he sat up repeating the name of God, and fixing his mind on the great Being upon whom he called. These and a hundred other toils he undertook until, completely exhausted, he declared himself incapable even "of standing up against the wind," so seriously was his strength reduced. By this time his fame as a saint had become known, and men from various places came to be his disciples, but his weakness was so great that their first duty was to take him home to recuperate.

Two officials high in the service of the Rájá of Karáli joined themselves to Imád as disciples upon his arrival, and they took the utmost care of him. Besides these, numbers of the "faith-

ful " travelled from far to look upon the face of a man who had found favour with God, and many handsome gifts of money were laid at his feet.

As health returned, Imád recommenced his preaching work in the streets. His sincerity and eloquence moved many of his hearers so that numbers confessed their sins, and as a sign of their repentance and thanksgiving they drew near and touched his knees. All this time in his own soul there was no rest.

Another ten years passed, bringing closer intimacy with the leaders of his religion, and he who had once thought that Islám was the noblest religion upon earth was now proving to his grief that " their [the religious leaders'] example, bigotry, frauds, deceit, ignorance and moral character were such as convinced my mind that there was no true religion in the world. I had been a vehement opponent of the Christian religion, and I now concluded that it was better for me to live in ease, act honestly and be satisfied with believing in the unity of God " than to continue the religious life.

So for six years he made trial of the easier way, but in comfortable moments there would suddenly overshadow him a mighty fear of death and the future life. At times this was so great that he believed himself ill of some incurable disease, and, seeking out the best physicians, he

would undergo treatment, which he admitted did him no good but only "angered" him. In Lahore, where he was then living, he heard of the conversion of an old and valued friend to Christianity, Maulvi Safdar Ali of Jubbulpur. He was greatly shocked at the news and reviled the name of one he had loved before. But in his heart he knew very well that Safdar Ali had always borne a high character and could be relied upon.

Imád conceived the idea of turning his friend back to his old faith by proving the falsity of Christianity, and to this end he looked up his controversial books, and hunted out his neglected copy of the Bible. Not satisfied with personal study of the latter, he actually requested the help of a missionary, that he might thoroughly investigate the weaknesses of the Book. The chapters in Matthew recording the Sermon on the Mount laid hold upon him; he became very agitated, and could not rest at night, thinking over such words as he had never conceived it possible for a man to speak. There flooded over his mind the old doubts in regard to his own faith, which he hoped he had put to sleep for ever. Then here was such simple and yet such profound truth that "I discovered that the people of my faith had been deceived and are lying in error, for salvation can be found only in the Christian religion."

Upon the discovery of this almost blinding truth, Imád sought out his old friends and the leaders of his faith, taxed them with the charge of knowing that their religion was false, and asked them what they were going to do about it. Stirring scenes ensued, but after a long wordy struggle he records in his autobiography:

“Some of them said quite plainly that Mahommed was not true, but— And they began to defend him and themselves. They said they esteemed Christ highly, but were puzzled as to the Trinity, nor could they understand His being the Son of God, and for these reasons they could not accept Christianity. So I committed them all to God, for besides praying for them I knew not what to do, and I went to Amritsar, and received baptism at the hand of the first missionary who had sent me the message of the Gospel by letter to Lahore.”

After baptism he wrote a book, *Tahqíq ul Imán* (*The Investigation of the True Faith*), and others of a similar character, in the hope of turning men from the faith of Islám to Christ. Especially he addressed himself to those Mahomedans who sincerely believed that their faith is of God. He associated himself with the Christian church of the place, but he laboured unceasingly for the great community he had left, and whose religion he had amply proved could never satisfy the soul. He bore testimony to his love in these words:

“ Since my entrance into the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ I have had great peace of soul. Agitation and restlessness have entirely left me, and my mind is never perplexed now. I rejoice greatly in the Lord. My friends and followers have all become my enemies, and in all ways they strive to afflict me, but in proportion as I am dishonoured, He gives me peace, comfort and joy.”

In speaking of the terrible break in his family life consequent on his following Christ he offers the prayer:

“ May God give them grace and open their eyes, that they may become partakers of the everlasting salvation, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.”

And so, after much tribulation, Imád-ud-dín found peace and joy in the only Saviour. He consecrated the remainder of his days to the one great work of winning his old co-religionists to Christ by voice and pen and every self-sacrifice he could think of.

Eventually Imád became an ordained clergyman of the Church of England. As a tribute to his learning and splendid talents, in 1884 the Archbishop of Canterbury conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He wrote more than two dozen exhaustive treatises in his endeavour to convince Mahommedans of the truth of the Christian religion. His high family status,

his wide knowledge, his long and arduous search after truth, all commended him to the people he strove to reach. His zeal for the souls of men was equalled only by his devotion to his Lord, and he has left behind him a record and testimony which are undeniable proof of the all-sufficient grace that seeks and never tires until it has brought home the soul for whom Christ died.

*“ Lord, what a change within us one short hour
Spent in Thy presence will avail to make!
What heavy burdens from our bosoms take!
What parched grounds refresh, as with a shower!
We kneel, how weak! we rise, how full of power!
Why, therefore, should we do ourselves this wrong,
Or others, that we are not always strong;
That we are ever overborne with care;
That we should ever weak or heartless be,
Anxious, or troubled, when with us is prayer,
And joy and strength and courage are with Thee? ”*

X

JUDGE B. C. CHATTERJEA

WHEN Judge B. C. Chatterjea was baptized he made a statement of his faith, in which he explained how he had been led to become a Christian. At the close of it he broke into an impassioned prayer:

“ May I, dear Saviour, participate in Thy love and glorify Thee upon earth as long as I live. Thou art dearer to me than all else. Thou saidst, ‘ He that loveth father or mother is not worthy of me.’ I leave all those who are dear to me for Thee. Keep them under Thy protection, and bring them under Thy yoke. Be with me now, that I may not fall into temptation and deny Thee, but may show forth Thy light before men, that they, seeing my good works, may glorify the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.”

He added:

“ How shall I express my thanks to my heavenly Father? Oh, the wonderful mercy of God, that dragged this vile wretch from the den of idolatry and sin, through the labyrinths of intricate ways to the saving knowledge of light and truth! Oh, the breadth, the depth, the length and the height of the love of Christ! ”

B. C. Chatterjea was born of Kulin Bráhmín parents, and was educated in a government school in Barisál, where he sat for and passed the Calcutta University examination entitling him to join the Presidency College with a scholarship. During the period of his study in Calcutta, he took up his abode in the house of Pandit Sambhunáth, who afterwards became the first Indian Judge of the Calcutta High Court Bench. From childhood he had been taught to regard religion as the main thing in life, and in boyhood he was frequently discovered shedding tears while reading some portions of the great epics, the Rámayana or the Mahábhárata.

Strictly orthodox in all he knew of religion, he would instantly bathe to take away the pollution arising from the touch of one of another faith, and after his investiture with the sacred thread he became very punctilious in all observances of fasts, prayers, penances and other obligations. But school life gave him a knowledge of English which broadened his ideas and cast doubts into his mind which he could not readily put to sleep. Imperceptibly his thoughts and opinions became modified, until what he called the "superstitions" of Hinduism fell away, and he became a Deist, although outwardly remaining a Hindu.

About that time an intimate friend of his, becoming interested in Christianity, drew his at-

tention to that religion, but with no guide to direct him he read such books as Paine's *Age of Reason*—which made him think there could be no truth in Christianity; such books as he read in Christianity's defence only confused issues in his mind. He also came across some Unitarian tracts and a prayer book, which later he used daily in his private devotions. In one of these books he found some quotations from the sermon on the mount, which brought the reflection, "Christianity is something better than I thought it to be;" and the prayer of our Lord upon the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," deeply impressed him.

But his judicial mind needed to travel far before he could find the stable ground of belief in Christ, and much time and thought were spent on reading English theological works which are now out of date, but which carried great weight in their day. His friendship with a baptized Bráhmin named T. C. Bannerjea, who was afterwards a Baptist missionary, and the works of Dr. Channing deeply affected him. He says of the latter: "The arguments of the evidences were irresistible and touching. They made me believe in miracles."

Other books on the Bible confirmed his faith in its divine origin, and he looked upon Jesus as the first-born of all created beings, but not as God. He says:

“I felt the excellencies of Christianity. The perfect morality of the Gospel and the transcendental character of our Lord struck me more than anything else. He stands alone in the annals of mankind.”

But Mr. Chatterjea was baffled and perplexed by many passages of Scripture, the true explanation of which he could not arrive at. Most of the finest Christians he knew were Trinitarians, but all the time he was reading Unitarian books. He was in earnest in his quest after truth, and though by a long road it was by a sure one that he gained what he sought. He was troubled concerning the nature of sin, and rejected the doctrine of the Trinity on account of its incomprehensibility and mysteriousness. The atonement, as he understood it, was only a stumbling-block, and his intellect must needs be satisfied before he could accept doctrines so opposed to all he knew.

Among others, Dr. Cowell (afterwards professor of Oriental languages in Cambridge University) was instrumental in satisfying his mind, until he felt himself able to declare: “All the arguments taken together produced a wonderful conviction and confirmed my faith.”

Speaking of this time he remarked: “My guiding principle was the celebrated saying of Christ, ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.’” Sundays were set apart for searching after truth, and spare half-hours in the busy week were given to the same end. Every day he read a

portion of the New Testament, marking difficult passages, and this he did with the daily prayer that God would open his eyes to behold wondrous things, even the pearl of great price, during those quiet times.

The true nature of sin, which the Hindu religion never reveals, and the doctrine of atonement he could not understand, but within himself a change was steadily taking place. "I felt how little I could do to extricate myself from my sins. The sick man cannot cure himself; he requires a physician, and I require One who can take away my great, abominable sins." Mercifully in course of time there were placed in his hands books that helped his study of the Bible and his thoughts of Christ, and he began to consent to the necessity of Christ as the Sin-bearer, the only Saviour from sin, and as this dawned upon him he declared: "Nothing now was sweeter to me than Jesus."

He dated his first feeling of interest in Christ to the year 1860, when he came across the Bráhmó-Samáj in Calcutta. The great Bráhmó leader, Keshab Chandra Sen, was issuing his famous tracts, the first of which was entitled *Young Bengal, This Is for You!* This he procured, and he became a subscriber to those that followed. He studied the preaching of this Samáj, which had great influence in weaning him from Hinduism and giving him his first ideas of Christ.

Chatterjea had a type of mind not easily satisfied, for he had been nurtured under a strict Hinduism and in philosophy and ways of thought which could be sloughed off only by a patient solving of religious problems. Many books needed to be studied, and the battle of books was a hard fight before he could say: "I glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world, and this is my humble testimony."

The long path had been painfully traversed and had brought Judge Chatterjea to the crisis of his life, which meant an ever-upward path and the leaving of much he held dear in this world. After full conviction, he had to face the break-up of very precious family ties, for he was the only son of his father, and his parents were devotedly attached to him. It argued no weakness that he shed many bitter tears and offered many prayers for guidance before he could take the step of confession.

He first broke the news to his friend, Pandit Sambhunáth, "with whom I had some pathetic correspondence," he says. There was a deep affection between the two men, and baptism meant a rift that never could be healed.

But he could not turn back, and his persistence brought a coldness that deeply grieved him. The constant reminder, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me," gave

him no rest, and brought him to a final decision in regard to his parents. He bade them a tender farewell, and became baptized. Very soon after this event his father died.

Writing twenty-five years later, when he was a Judge of the High Court in Calcutta, he said:

“From the date of my baptism I have continued religious study, including questions connected with scepticism, and this with a view to meet the arguments of my educated countrymen, and to try humbly to do some good to them. Instead of shaking or even weakening my faith in the religion of Christ, I am strengthened. I am strongly convinced of the divine origin of the Christian religion, intellectually, morally and experimentally, so that I cannot part with it for anything whatsoever. I have found it to be, as Christ has said, ‘the pearl of great price.’”

*“In simple trust, like theirs who heard
Beside the Syrian sea
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow Thee.”*

XI

MATHÚRA NÁTH BOSE

MATHÚRA NÁTH BOSE was born in 1843 in Jessore, a town in Bengal, and here he went to school. One day a European missionary gave him a copy of one of the Gospels, which he took from his hand and ripped into atoms before his face—"the book which subsequently saved my life," he afterwards often remarked.

When he grew old enough he was sent to college, and upon leaving for Calcutta his teacher said: "If you go to Dr. Duff's College you will become a Christian," a prophecy which made him afraid, and determined him in *not* hearing or reading anything about the Bible; he hated Christians and Christianity without reason, for he knew little of either.

The Bráhmó-Samáj had come into being under Rájá Rám Mohan Roy, and was at that time flourishing under Keshab Chandra Sen in Calcutta. Soon after Mathúra reached Calcutta he attended a meeting of young Bráhmós one Sunday, presided over by the great Keshab, who read from a book "words which seemed to impart life

to my dying spirit," he recorded. He listened to the reading with intense excitement and joy, never having heard such words before. He inquired from a friend who sat near him who the author of the book was; the reply was that it was Rám Mohan Roy.

He was amazed to hear that this great Indian had written such a book, and hurried to buy a copy, but when he came to inquire he was told the book was out of print. The book in question was a compilation of the sayings of Jesus, taken from the Gospels, by Rám Mohan Roy, called *The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness*, and published by him in English, Bengali and Sanskrit.

Mathúra then begged that a copy of the book should be lent to him, and with some trouble he persuaded a friend to let him have the reading of one. With a bounding heart he carried it to his room, where, as he says, he read and studied it night and day. He even took it out at dusk, that the last rays of light might light up the sacred page for him. While thus occupied one evening, a friend called and asked why he was not ready for a walk. Showing him the book, Mathúra said he had been reading the very thing his soul thirsted after; he designated it "Rám Mohan Roy's precious treasure."

The friend took up the book, and then remarked that everything in it could be found in

the Christians' Bible and much beside, and that Rám Mohan had only compiled it. This news gladdened Mathúra, for if *The Precepts of Jesus* was out of print the Bible was not. He quickly procured a copy of the Bible, and started on a thorough examination of the Gospels.

Mathúra had gone to Calcutta dejected and depressed, feeling that life was a burden, but here was a Book that put so much energy and hope into him that the melancholy following upon leaving his home completely vanished. If any sense of gloom threatened him he would take down his Book and read the words of Jesus, and the inspiration of them soon dispelled it. From that time onwards he read the Bible regularly, and on Sunday, when free from college classes, he took any difficulties to one of the missionaries, who was always happy to throw what light he could upon them. Although still a Hindu, he boldly discussed the Gospels with his fellow-students, declaring there was no other religious book to compare with the New Testament. Milton, Johnson, Addison and many another great English writer were all studied by these young men, but Mathúra claimed that neither these nor any of the great Hindu sacred writings were to be compared with this.

As he continued to study the Bible he became growingly puzzled at the mysteries surrounding the necessity of Christ, His coming as man, His

sufferings, His death as a malefactor. Why should He lay aside the majesty of His godhead and bow His neck to such a life and death? Mathúra read Butler's *Analogy* and Paley's *Evidences*, and particularly Bushnell's *Character of Jesus*, and from them he found help. The light brought to bear upon the problems that worried him by his friends the missionaries he felt more helpful still, until at length he became convinced that Jesus was indeed the only Saviour.

Then he began to worship Christ and to pray in His Name. This change was accompanied by a great sense of freedom from sin, for he had cast himself, in all his unworthiness, at the foot of the cross, and the miracle of miracles had happened—he felt himself pardoned and accepted by God through the love of Christ Jesus.

It being known amongst Mathúra's college friends that he was seeking truth and studying the Bible, a special friend, in great anxiety, said to him one day: "If you prove to your satisfaction that Christianity is true, will you become a Christian?"

The quick reply came: "If I find it true, I shall certainly do so."

"Do not act so foolishly," his friend rejoined. "Do not leave all to follow Christ. Take my advice and become a Bráhmó, and save both sides."

Mathúra sadly remarked: "Many young men

become Bráhmós, I believe, to ‘save both sides’—and ultimately lose their own souls.”

He had found Hinduism failing to satisfy his spiritual needs; he had tested the inability of Bráhmós to explain the mystery of how God can be just while reconciling the ungodly, but in casting himself upon Christ he had met One who, in Himself, satisfied his spirit, untouched heretofore. Accordingly, he was no longer filled with questionings but was possessed with a deep peace and joy which he knew flowed direct to him from Christ Himself. His desire was to become perfectly obedient to God’s will, but as he pondered what that would mean he felt as if his cross was too heavy to bear. He looked forward to the breaking of all home ties, and said:

“To cast off all and to be cast off by all those that are bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh! But for a Christian to live in a Hindu home where everything in it is connected with idolatry! But to neglect to confess Christ before men would be sin indeed.”

For more than two years he hesitated to take the step that meant total separation from all he loved on earth. He felt an inward weakness, and continually the cry went up from his heart: “Lord, have mercy upon me! Thou seest I have no strength in myself. Draw me out, I beseech Thee, by Thine own strength; enable me, I beseech Thee, to confess Christ before men.” And

the day came when his prayers were answered: "I came out, for God gave me strength."

He received baptism, then returned to his home for a time, according to the expressed desire of his relatives. But this arrangement proving an impossible one, he received further strength, to cut himself entirely adrift from all earthly ties. Thereafter he felt a mighty recompense, in a great inflow of peace, "because I now live in the presence of the Prince of Peace."

Mr. Bose for a time practised as a pleader in the Calcutta High Court, but his heart continually turned to the work of teaching and preaching. He turned from a lucrative profession to take up preaching among the despised low-castes living among the swamps at Gopalganj, one hundred and fifty miles below Calcutta. Much of his work had to be done by native boat in feverish and malarial districts, but he joyfully gave himself to these poor people and became to them a true ambassador of Christ to the end of his life.

*"From the unreal lead me to the real,
From darkness lead me to the light—
From death lead me to immortality."*

XII

CHANDRA LEELA, PRIESTESS

TUCKED away in a corner of the Himalayas, nestles the little independent state of Nepal. It is a wealthy and beautiful country, with its own sovereign and government. On the southern boundary stretches an immense forest full of giant trees, rivers and wild animals—rarely traversed, except by keen sportsmen, because of the many dangers incurred in crossing through such a wild country.

Besides possessing great natural beauty, Nepal stores the wealth of ages within her borders. Deep down beneath the soil lie mines of gold, silver, iron, copper and other precious metals, while the surface annually produces rich harvests of rice, wheat, cotton, sugar and many other useful and luscious products. Far away on the skyline stretch the highest mountains in the world; the oft-hidden head of Mount Everest rears her snowy peak where no bird ever sings, where no green thing ever grows, and where no created thing ever lives. The true God is hardly known in this country of Nepal, but the people have many idols and temples, many sacred shrines and streams.

For hundreds of years the eldest son of a certain Bráhmín family has acted as family priest to the Rájá of Nepal, and this man is honoured more than any other priest in the whole country. Now, it happened that more than seventy years ago a little girl was born in this priestly family, and she was so sweet that her parents called her Chandra Leela, Moon-Play.

Day by day Moon-Play grew in beauty. She was dearly loved by all, especially when she developed into beauty of character as well as of face. Chandra Leela had everything to make her happy, for not only was she greatly beloved, but her indulgent parents were rich, and her home was both luxurious and happy.

Before she was seven years old the Bráhmíns all declaring it was time, according to their custom, for Chandra Leela to be married, her parents arranged that her marriage take place to the only son of a Bráhmín priest, a friend of the family and the possessor of considerable wealth. The child understood nothing of these things, but because they brought her splendid jewels and many fine clothes, she was very delighted. Costly gold bangles were fastened on her wrists and arms, and around her ankles deep silver anklets, tinkling with little silver bells; and handsome gold chains for her neck and jewels for her hair and nose completed her happiness.

Then the wedding ceremony took place. All was

excitement. For many days and far into the night musicians played; the house was crammed with guests, and hundreds of people were feasted, while little Moon-Play sat all covered with her jewels and was very proud and happy.

After many days of feasting and merriment the guests went away. The small bride remained with her parents, and once more played about the house as she had done before the wedding, the only difference being that she wore handsomer clothes and was always loaded with jewels.

Two happy years passed away, and then one day a messenger came hot-footed, carrying bad news for the happy child. Very soon the mother and all the women of the household were weeping and beating their breasts—and little Chandra Leela understood that she was a widow.

All play was done with for ever. She sat down on the floor dumb with fear. Presently her pretty clothes were all stripped from her trembling body, and a plain white cloth was wrapped round her instead. The woman-barber came, cut off her hair and, with a razor, shaved her head. Finally the girl was stripped of all her lovely jewels that she had learned to love so much.

The anklets and bracelets were not easy to manage, but the barber-woman had no pity for the wide-eyed child. She had frequently broken such things with a hammer before, leaving the

little wrists and feet of other small widows bleeding, and although she did not dare to be so cruel now, she had no mind to be gentle. And so the hammer was brought into action, until the wrists and ankles were free, and the tears of mother and child mingled as the broken gold fell upon the ground.

Once more the house became quiet, but all the childish joy had gone out of the life of this nine-year-old bride, now become a widow. She believed the teaching of the sacred books that in some unaccountable way she was responsible for the sickness and death of her boy-husband. In some former existence she had offended the gods, and they now had their revenge in making her a widow for life.

Despised and hated because of her misfortune, the child sought refuge with her father. Looking at her pitiful face, he felt grieved for her. Being naturally a kind man, he began to teach her to read and write, and so the weary hours became filled with useful and interesting study.

For four years under her father's tutelage she worked hard at her studies. Her mother was dead, and the two, father and child, were now very dear to each other. One day the father told Chandra Leela that he was going on a very long pilgrimage, and that he would take her with him. As soon as the preparations were completed the two set out on their long journey together.

Chandra Leela was now thirteen years old, and she was a pleasant companion for her father. They said good-bye to their home in far Nepal, and turned their faces southward, towards the holy city of Jagannáth, a long and weary pilgrimage. Their object was to worship at the shrine of this hideous deity, and to do all the things their religion enjoined upon them in visiting this sacred place. The girl had never been out of her own country before, and everything was strange to her, but she had her father and was not afraid. Day after day the long tramp in the sun made them both very fatigued, so after many weeks of such travel when they reached their destination they were deeply thankful.

But, alas! it was not very long after their arrival that her father fell suddenly ill. Calling his daughter to him, he gave her a bunch of keys and told her that she would have to return to Nepal without him, for he was going to die.

Chandra Leela was very frightened. She sat down by him, and through her tears she watched him growing weaker day by day, until at last he breathed his last. Then she followed his body to the burning-place of the dead and saw it consumed to ashes.

Broken-hearted, this fatherless widow found herself a stranger in a strange land, and knew that she must somehow get back to her old home

in the far-away north. Some pilgrims saw her loneliness and invited her to join their party, for they were travelling in her direction. Chandra Leela gratefully accepted the kindly offer of protection and friendship thus made, and with them she turned her back on the place that had cost her father his life.

She had enough money for all her needs, and often was able to help some of her new friends when in difficulty, but the weariness of this painful journey and the loss of her father weighed upon her heart and made those long weeks a memory never to be forgotten. How she ever accomplished this terrible journey she was never able to explain to anyone, but eventually she came to her own country and at last to her own door. How long it seemed since she and her father had joyfully passed through that doorway together—and now she came back alone!

Not long after she returned Chandra Leela, following her father's instructions, took the bunch of keys and, opening certain boxes, she found within what would once have given her supreme delight. But now her eyes filled with tears, for there she saw the wealth left to her by the two men (her father and her husband) who ought to have been her protectors through life. At least she had the comfort of knowing that she need never be poor, and her future was assured.

The time was now filled up with study. The

learned books of her father and family were taken down, carefully read and learned by heart. Her knowledge of Sanskrit was good, and she read in it steadily. From her sacred books she began to learn that one ray of hope still remained to her, and this she seized upon with all the intensity of her nature. She discovered that if any widow will make the pilgrimage to the four corners of India, to worship at its great temples, she might hope for forgiveness of the sins that had brought her to her low estate. The four holy places of pilgrimage were Badrináth, in the north; Rámeshwaram, in the south; Jagannáth, in the east; and Dwárkanáth, in the west—an appalling journey even for a strong man. But Chandra Leela weighed the cost, and came to the conclusion that it was better to die on pilgrimage as her father had done (a meritorious act), than to continue living this aimless life.

Upon discovering this secret, she determined to waste no time, and yet she did not dare to tell her stepmother and the rest of the family of her project. There were two servants of the family whom she absolutely trusted, and one day when the house was quiet, she drew the two to her room, and whispered her secret in their ears. She told them that if they would go with her they should have every comfort she could provide, and be sure of a great reward in the next life for doing such a holy act. As the two girls listened,

their hearts were fired with the adventure, especially as it meant so much to their beloved young mistress. They made their promise, and stealthily began their arrangements for the terrible journey they were contemplating.

Very secretly Chandra Leela secured around her body all the gold she would require, and chose out such clothes as she needed; and then she lay down to rest. When all the house was locked in slumber she arose and, gently awakening the two servants, she and the two other girls left the shelter of the old home, and set out on the quest for forgiveness. Long before dawn they had travelled across the rough hills and were lost to those they had left behind.

A whole week went by, and they had made only a start on the pilgrimage that was to last for many years. Every day as they trudged on Chandra Leela kept counting her beads and saying prayers. Whenever they came to a temple or sacred stream they worshipped and bathed and gave presents to the Bráhmans, until they reached Calcutta, very footsore and weary.

At Calcutta they stayed a short time, to recover from their fatigue, and day by day they visited holy places, one of which was the famous temple at Kálighát. No one who has ever seen that temple can forget it. It is sacred to the goddess Káli, who is always represented as wearing a garland of human skulls round her neck.

In one hand this goddess carries the freshly severed head of a man, and in another the knife dripping with his blood. A half-naked Bráhmaṇ priest took the girls down a narrow road leading to the temple. It was crowded with men and women all anxious to worship this terrible deity. In the sacred tank great numbers of women and girls were bathing in its muddy waters and repeating charms and the names of the gods. When they entered the temple enclosure they saw the huge figure of the elephant-headed god Ganesh, and then they were led to the central shrine containing the image of the goddess Káli.

The sun blazed overhead, and the unspeakable odours of a multitude of men and women, combined with the smell arising from numberless offerings of flowers and flowing blood of goats being sacrificed to satisfy the thirst of the deity, made the girls almost ill. But they went through all the worship as the priest directed them, until all the demands of their religion were satisfied. They were greatly saddened by the sight of many old pilgrims who had come from far that they might die in this sacred spot—and some were actually dying. Chandra Leela was reminded of the day when she had sat by her dying father, and hot tears of memory for herself and pity for these dying ones stole unheeded down her cheeks.

The three girls, now turning their backs on Calcutta, once more toiled along the dusty roads

as before. When they were quite exhausted they reached Jagannáth—the same point to which years before Chandra Leela had gone with such a light heart. Here she spent a couple of weeks in special worship, and feasted the Bráhmans, and then with her faithful servants turned southwards.

After much more toilsome travel, they reached the sacred place of Rámeshwaram. This place is famous all over India as the spot where Hanumán, the monkey-god, built a rough bridge from India to Ceylon, to enable his master, the god Rám, to pass over to the rescue of his wife, the goddess Sita, who had been stolen away by the demon-gods of that island. The huge temple at Rámeshwaram was built to commemorate Rám's victory and the glorious return of the faithful Sita.

The three girls spent fifteen days here, and then turned westward, towards their third place of pilgrimage. Arrived at Dwárkanáth, they went through much the same programme as previously, then again went on pilgrimage, to the fourth and last sacred spot, Badrináth, amongst the eternal snows of the Himálayas.

They left behind the burning plains which they had traversed for so many years, and began the ascent of the great mountain barrier that lay between them and their desired destination. Soon the cold became bitter. The snow lay thick

upon the mountain tracks, which were often so narrow with deep precipices below that they could scarcely keep a footing, and their feet bled at every step; but they still pushed on. Over dangerous mountain tracks and frozen rocks they crawled, their strength oozing away moment by moment, until when they reached the shrine of Badrináth they were half-dead with cold and fatigue.

They spent five days in this beautiful place, where so many of their countrypeople have laid down their lives. And Chandra Leela hoped she had done all that her religion demanded, even from a widow like herself.

Still other holy places Chandra Leela visited, that she might do even more than the pilgrimage which was prescribed. On their return journey they came to Benáres, the most sacred city of the Hindus. There, within a few days, one of the two faithful servants was seized with cholera, and died. A short time after the other girl also died. Chandra Leela was left alone.

Seven long years had passed since the little party of three girls had left their home in far Nepál. This great search after forgiveness had cost the lives of her two maids; almost all her money was gone and, utterly weary in body and disappointed in mind, Chandra Leela joined a party of pilgrims going to Midnapur. About twenty miles from that city there is a fine resting-

place for pilgrims, which had been built by the Raja of that place, and it was his custom daily to send food to the "serai" for the travellers.

To this serai Chandra Leela went for rest, but when the Raja's gift of food was presented to her, she proudly declined, with the words: "I can buy my own." The news was carried to the Raja that a learned woman who was staying in the serai, and who was always occupied in reading in Sanskrit from the sacred books, had refused his gift of food. The Raja sent for her, and when he knew that she belonged to the priestly family who minister to the royal house of Nepal, he invited her to remain in his palace and become priestess to the ladies of his household. This she consented to do, and immediately moved from the serai to the Raja's residence.

For seven years she lived there, teaching the ladies of the palace and daily performing all the duties of the family priest. Then the Raja died, and after serving the new Raja for a time, Chandra Leela once more started out on pilgrimage, for her heart was uneasy and she knew no happiness.

This time she determined to abandon completely all earthly comfort, and suffer the austerities of the Hindu holy life common to sádhus and sanyasis. She covered her body with ashes, streaked her face with coloured lines, rubbed cow-dung into her beautiful hair, and dressed

herself as a religious beggar. She took the vow that every day she would sit in the hot sun with four fires round her. Pious Hindus helped her keep her vow by piling on wood, and so kept the fires burning.

Later, when the cold season came, she spent the whole night waist-deep in a pool of water, praying and shivering until dawn, and "all this I did to find God," she afterwards said. For three years she lived this terrible life, but, finding no relief, she cut off her matted hair, which had never been washed or combed all that time, and cast it, as an offering to the gods, into the river Ganges. As she threw it away she exclaimed: "I have suffered all that can be required of me—and all to no purpose!" Having bathed, she once more dressed herself in clean clothes and started again on the road of pilgrimage.

One day Chandra Leela came to the house of a Hindu woman whom she knew. Putting the idols and Sanskrit holy books which she always carried with her at the feet of her friend, she said: "Take these things; I shall never want them again. I shall never again worship these gods." With broken faith, she thus turned from her old religion for ever.

Up to this time Chandra Leela had never talked to Christians, but soon after she had cast away her idols she was in a house where a girl was reading a copy of the Bible, and in its pages she

began anew her search after God. This time she was not disappointed, for in those pages she read unimaginable things of hope and wonder. And she made the great discovery that not by her own works, but by Jesus Christ, she could find God. Chandra Leela believed the Book, and did find God—and with Him joy, forgiveness and perfect peace.

After making public confession of her faith in Christ, Chandra Leela consecrated all her powers to His service, in just the whole-hearted way customary to her, and with a deep determination to undo as far as possible the work she had done in the past. Filled with a still deeper longing to bring others into true happiness and peace, she gave herself to the work of preaching Christ. Once more she started out on pilgrimage, but this time with a shining face and a heart full of joy and hope. She visited all the holy places of pilgrimage where she had herself so hopelessly sought for God, and in every place she boldly preached Christ as the one and only Saviour to satisfy the pious heart of India. Many wonderful things happened on this life journey of hers, but one only can find a place here.

She knew that in her own country of Nepal no missionaries were allowed to enter, so she made her way back there, and told the Gospel story in every place possible. She was called to appear before the magistrates of one town, but when they

found she belonged to the high priest's family of Nepal they let her go unharmed.

While she was in her own country her brother fell ill. He had heard of Christ from her, and he secretly confessed to her that he believed in Him as his only Saviour. When it became apparent that he would die, he told his sister that he wished to receive baptism. But there was no one in all that country who could baptize him. Chandra Leela looked into his dying eyes and said: "When I was a Hindu I was a priestess. God will not be angry if I do this for you, because there is no one else to do it." So, kneeling by his side, she heard his dying testimony of faith and love; and, devoutly baptizing him, she had the joy of watching his face grow restful under the grey shadow of death. Soon after his baptism he passed into life eternal, and Chandra Leela was left alone with her dead.

Some Hindu friends came to make arrangements for his cremation, and in spite of Chandra Leela's asseverations that he had died as a Christian, they wound up his body and carried it away to the burning ghát. She watched them build the pyre and place the body upon it. Heavy rain began to fall; they could not get the fire to light. Chandra Leela then said: "I told you he was a Christian, and my God will not allow you to burn him as a Hindu. Give him to me, and I will bury him as a Christian." So in the drenching rain

she was allowed to take him away, and quietly she buried him with Christian rites.

Soon afterwards she left her own country, never to return. She spent her remaining years in telling all with whom she came in contact how she had found forgiveness and peace, and many believed her words and, like her, found Christ. Thus, after many years of glorious service Chandra Leela gladly obeyed the call to eternal life, and following unexampled suffering she entered into the untold bliss of the presence of her Lord and Master Christ, to rejoice for evermore.

*"When I awake I shall have done with tears,
And the rough retinue of cares and fears;
No memory of shadows shall remain
That haunted all these heavy hours of pain—
Shadows of lingering doubt and old distrust,
The heritage and burden of our dust.
They shall depart as visions of the night
Are conquered by the floods of morning light.*

*"When I awake the soul's deep yearning quest
Shall find in perfect love eternal rest.
Then I shall see Him even as He is,
Who, while I wandered, knew and named me His.
When I awake in the better land,
Divine Redeemer, like Thee I shall stand.
Not long the slumber and the dreams abide—
When I awake, I shall be satisfied."*

XIII

PRINCE RÁMA VARMA OF COCHIN

CAPE COMORIN is the Land's End of India, and marks the southernmost boundary of the beautiful native state of Travancore. Long back in the history of that country a young man of the royal family determined to follow Christ, but he did so at the cost of his life, for he was conveyed to a precipitous rock outside Nagercoil and thrown from its summit and killed.

North of Travancore and adjoining it is the native state of Cochin, and the home of Prince Ráma Varma, second son of the reigning prince of his day. This young man happily escaped the fate of the unfortunate Travancore prince, and lived long enough to confess Christ and bear a noble testimony to the love he bore to his Saviour. He was born in 1814, in the palace of his father the Rájá of Cochin, and, according to the custom of the family, his mother dedicated him from birth to the family god.

With a religious life ahead of him, everything was done to secure for him the best education possible designed to fit him for such a life. Special

teachers were found for him in philosophy and literature even when he was only a child. At an early age he greatly pleased his strictly orthodox Hindu father by undergoing the painful rite of "sealing" three times over. This is done by branding both shoulders with a red-hot discus, and it signifies that from henceforth the one so branded is the willing slave of the great god Vishnu.

Ráma Varma's studies progressed extraordinarily well until, at the age of 14, the Rájá died. This event threw the royal family into confusion; for, according to the custom of the country, succession is through the female line, and therefore it was not the son but the elder sister's son who succeeded to the title and honours of the throne.

So the son of the Rájá's eldest sister came to the throne, and at once he began a petty persecution of the widowed Ráni and her family. Accordingly, they left the court, and retired to a private dwelling in the country, where Ráma Varma was forced to give much of his time to the management of the estate. Three years later Colonel Morrison, the British Resident in Cochin at the time, effected a reconciliation between the two households, and Ráma Varma was once more set free for study. He lived very much the life of a recluse, dressed simply and secluded himself from all except his own family, the priests and his very nearest friends. He hoped by adopting

something of the ascetic life to find rest of mind. But about that time two events occurred in close succession which deeply affected his religious views.

One of these events was that the Bráhmín priest officiating in his family temple suddenly disappeared, taking with him the fine jewels belonging to the god, valued at fifteen thousand rupees. The police were informed, and Ráma Varma joined his very earnest prayers to their efforts for the recovery of the precious jewels, but nothing was ever heard again either of the priest or of the jewels. This greatly disturbed the even tenor of his life. Within a short time another robbery took place—the disappearance of the golden image of the great god Vishnu, to whom Ráma Varma's life had been vowed, and which was the special favourite of his dead father.

In spite of all efforts, the image was never recovered. The fact that the two gods had proved themselves incapable of bringing the robbers to justice shattered the faith of Ráma Varma once and for all. He immediately gave up attendance at the temple, and even refused to be constrained by his beloved mother to honour deities that had caused him to despise and distrust them.

Soon after these events a British ship put in at the port of Cochin, and the captain, who was a godly man, presented a copy of the Bible to his brother. The latter brought it to Ráma Varma,

with the request that he should read and compare it with the Hindu holy books. Unhappily he started on the first chapter of Matthew, and he soon grew tired of the long list of curious names at the beginning, so he closed the book, imagining that much of it was like this; and he seldom opened it again. He was caused, however, to think seriously about life and death and the hereafter, by the unexpected death of a young girl of his family, an event which made him turn again to his Hindu philosophy, and diligently search for some solution to the problems that harassed his mind.

One of his cousins, studying in a mission High School, tried to persuade him to join also, in order to perfect his knowledge of English; but instead he later entered a similar institution in Cochin. In that school he became much impressed with the type of Christian prayer with which the day's work was always commenced. One day he heard the English missionary in charge talking about Hinduism and the priests of the Hindu religion, in a manner according with his own knowledge and ideas, and he frankly said so; whereupon the missionary asked his acceptance of an English Bible, and advised him as to the best method of studying it.

Ráma Varma took the Bible and followed the wise advice given him. Eventually he decided to go to hear what Christian preaching was like, so he paid a visit to the church. That day he heard

a sermon on the text, "He made intercession for the transgressors," which brought him up against the undeniable fact that Jesus was his Intercessor. This led him to decide to be a disciple—but a secret disciple, for fear of family troubles. For a time he rejoiced in his growing knowledge and belief in Christ.

Some months later he was returning by boat to Cochin when a sudden storm swept across the great lake he was crossing. His boat almost overturned, and with the utmost difficulty the men prevented a fatal accident. It was so terrible a night of fears and of struggles to keep afloat that when morning came, and he was brought safely to land, he set foot on shore with the strong determination to delay his baptism no longer, but to cast his all upon the Rock of Ages publicly.

There was some delay, but at last he bade his mother and family a last farewell, and together with his Bráhmín friend who was also a secret believer, he was baptized on April 5, 1835. His sacred thread was broken, and crowds gathered to witness an earthly prince formally forsake his gods and despising earthly gain take upon himself the name of Christ.

Among those who heard his witness were his uncle and brother. The former publicly cursed him for the disgrace he had brought upon his family, and the brother had secreted on his person a dagger with which to slay him. But when the

boy looked in his brother's face the old affection disarmed him; the dagger fell to the ground, and the two young men wept in each other's arms. Ráma Varma begged his brother to join him, while he in his turn urged him to return to his broken-hearted mother and home; but neither gave way, and the brother turned away sorrowfully and went back to his home alone.

Very soon after Ráma Varma started on his Christian career he was astonished to find himself found fault with by Christians, that he should be willing to pray with anyone who loved Jesus, regardless of sect. This he could not understand, for did not Jesus come to bind men together in brotherly love—He who was their elder Brother? He spent his days in Christian service and study, and was often obliged to write long defences against the attacks of the Bráhmíns, who deeply resented his having made open confession of Christ.

In 1856 Ráma Varma was ordained as a missionary, with the status of a European, in the Cannonore Mission. The occasion was a notable one, for the Kolá Rájá of Chirakel accepted the invitation to be present and came in great state to the function. All unexpectedly, Christ met him in that church, and three days later the Kolá Rájá himself openly confessed Christ.

Ráma Varma was now forty-two, and a long life of usefulness was eagerly looked forward to,

since a royal prince might influence many of the upper classes and witness for Christ where others could not. But a dear friend had fallen ill of smallpox, which was raging in those parts, and although every effort was made to dissuade Ráma Varma from visiting him, when he knew that he was dying he went to comfort his beloved friend in his last hours.

Alas! he brought home the disease, and in a very few days he had joined his friend; a life of great promise thus came to an end. Even so, he had no regrets in departure and no fears for the future. He had cast his all away, for his Lord, and with joy he obeyed the call to go forth and meet Him. From His hand he doubtless received the crown of life which fadeth not away.

*"To Him who hears I whisper all;
And softer than the dews of heaven
The tears of Christ's compassion fall;
I know I am forgiven.*

*"Wrapped in the peace that follows prayer
I fold my hands in perfect trust,
Forgetful of the cross I bear,
Through noonday heat and dust.*

*"No more life's mysteries vex my thought;
No cruel doubts disturb my breast;
My heavy-laden spirit sought
And found the promised rest."*

XIV

VETHAMÁNIKAM

FIRST TRAVANCORE CONVERT

THE native state of Travancore is one of the beauty spots of the world. About the size of Wales, it extends from (and includes) Cape Comorin, the Land's End of India, up the west coast to the adjoining state of Cochin. The mountains known as the Western Gháts bound it on the east and the Indian Ocean on the west. The population is about five million. It boasts the highest mountain south of the Himálayas, and its wild hill country provides a home for bison, tigers, elephants, leopards, panthers, bears, boars and deer; while on the lower ranges live the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the land, a people brave, hardy and truth-loving who exist by the chase.

Nothing but seas lying between this little land and the Antarctic, the rough weather beats on its shores with such force as to make harbours few and insecure. For this reason the inland waterway known as the Backwater is of especial value for travelling and commercial purposes all the year round. A chain of lagoons, into which the

short rapid rivers are able to empty themselves, lie close to the shore for some two hundred miles, and these are joined by canals. Between the sea and the mountains lies the rolling country, with its myriads of palms, green stretches of rice fields, lazy lakes and fast-flowing rivers, its orderly towns, its almost English skies and eternal summer, all of which combine to make up a delectable land of great beauty.

The people are as interesting as the country. To this day the sovereign at his accession follows the immemorial custom of being weighed against gold when he assumes the right to govern. Succession and inheritance of property being through the female line, not the Máharája's son, but his sister's son succeeds to the throne. Travancore high-caste women thus hold a position of influence beyond women of most countries; they may marry whom they will. Handsome and capable, they are free to go where they will unveiled.

But Travancore is also the home of thousands of "untouchables"—once the slave population bought and sold with the land, who first, through Christianity (and now by better informed public opinion), began to enjoy the rights of human beings. To-day these very people are able to take their stand with the highest in the land, for with the knowledge of Christ the missionary took education, and the highest percentage of literacy in the whole of India is to be found in Travancore.

Although the Bráhmín is an importation from the British side, Travancore is rightly called the heaven of the twice-born, for here he holds supreme sway, even the sovereign himself holding his right to govern from the Bráhmíns of the country; the Hindu population is held in leash by bigotry of the worst type. Even so, Travancore has for many centuries had its representatives of Christianity in the Syrian Church, which is claimed to have been founded by St. Thomas, but until its discovery within comparatively recent years it lay hidden and dormant, and Hinduism had unchallenged sway. While Bengal was discussing Christ the tides of time that were moving other parts of India failed to reach this little state, but to-day almost a third of its population belong to some section of the Christian Church—Syrian, Roman or Protestant; and the story of how Protestant missions began is a true romance.

“The wind bloweth where it listeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit,” said One whose word was spirit and life. How Vethamánikam grew dissatisfied with his own faith and began to believe in one God is sure proof of the Spirit’s work in the heart of a man who had never heard of Christ, and yet was led step by step until he found Him.

Vethamánikam was the son of Pariah parents. Not long after his birth his father died, but the mother bravely took up life’s burdens and did

her best—a splendid best! She taught her boy to read and write, and trained him until he was able to earn his own livelihood. Under her teaching he grew up to hate evil, especially the use of intoxicants; and to love his family god, being most punctilious in all the observances of his religion. In early manhood he built a temple to this particular image and endowed it with some land. Loving books, he began to read the Puráṇas, and these set him thinking deeply over the matter of many gods, until he became assured in his own mind that there could be only one god; that being so, all other images were dishonouring to the one god. In this state of mind religion became an obsession to the young man, and he yearned for some one with whom he might share his thoughts, and who might perchance give him some guidance.

He had often heard of men going on pilgrimages to holy places, and he knew that Chidambaram was supposed to confer peculiar benefit on any pilgrim visiting it; for there was an extremely holy shrine in that place, whither myriads from all parts of India went for salvation. He understood that the reward of eternal happiness would be his if only he could worship in that sacred presence. But the distance was great, roads were few and poor and infested with the famous Thugs, as well as with ordinary thieves; men taking such journeys clearly carried their lives in their hands.

Vethamánikam knew all this, but life without peace of mind made him determine to undertake the peril. Lest he should die on the way, he begged his friends to give him, for carrying with him, the water and grains of rice which are always given to a dying person. He arranged to take with him a nephew, who could perform the funeral rites in case the worst happened. So, bidding farewell to all whom he loved, he started with the boy on his perilous journey.

They were dressed as pilgrims, with body and face smeared with ashes, and they carried with them their gifts to the god and the priests. At night they rested in the common sarai or under trees or in some friendly hut. And so they trudged on from day to day, until their own land was left far behind. At every shrine and holy river they stopped for worship, growing more weary, until, after many hardships, they came within sight of Chidambaram.

The great day had come and the great occasion. They had escaped the worst dangers of the way, and now eternal bliss was within their grasp. They made their way to the sacred shrine, and under the guidance of a priest they worshipped and gave what they had brought, and as evening drew on they rested themselves near a pillar of the temple. With sunset Vethamánikam observed men gathering with tom-toms which they began beating, accompanying the thud of their fingers

with songs of an immoral character. They were soon joined by a troop of dancing girls who whirled round suiting their movements to the words being sung. The priests came to look on and laugh.

A bitter disgust filled the heart of Vethamánikam as he looked on, for he had come seeking eternal bliss, and here he saw a sight that filled him with loathing. "How can I meditate in the midst of things like this! What shall I do?" This and many other things he asked himself, until weariness closed his troubled vision and he fell asleep.

In his sleep he had a dream. He thought an elderly man approached him, leaning upon a staff. The man stood over him, and said in a clear voice: "This is no place for you. It brings punishment, and not peace. I rebuke you, but I forgive. Rise up and go, and I will show you the way."

Having uttered these words, the old man touched him lightly with the staff, and he awoke.

All was still in the temple courtyard; no one was within sight. Vethamánikam awoke his nephew, and before dawn they were on their way once more. For fear of the dream they worshipped at no place by the way, but kept steadfastly on, in full belief that they would be led as they had been promised.

In due course they reached Tanjore, where Vethamánikam had a married sister; she, with

her husband, was a Christian. Being exhausted with hard travel, the two pilgrims remained in this city for some time, and there they heard for the first time about Christ. On Sunday Vethamánikam, in his pilgrim dress and smeared with the sacred ashes, made his way to the door of the Christian church where a service was being held; standing there, he listened attentively to all he heard. At the close the missionary came to speak to him, and asked who he was and whence he came.

The simple reply was: "We have come from Travancore to visit Chidambaram, that we might get salvation. The Supreme God has sent us here." After some conversation he received a booklet, which he was urged to read, and he was invited to come again. In speaking of that day as one of deep joy and satisfaction, he later remarked: "My Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ! He touched my heart, and it was melted before God. A light from heaven shone in upon my darkness, and I did not like to leave the place."

In this frame of mind Vethamánikam read the booklet. Feeling fully satisfied that the aged man of his dream had brought him to the place and people who knew the true God, he returned to the missionary and made known his desire to become an avowed follower of Jesus. Shortly afterward he was baptized, but remained there for some time longer, to receive further instruction. Burning with desire to take the good news to his own

countrymen, he again took staff in hand and turned his face homewards.

Meanwhile his long absence without means of sending any news to his friends had made them believe he was dead. They called in the astrologers, who, after consultation with the stars, agreed with them that he was no longer alive, and they and the whole village made a great public mourning for him. But one night there arrived at their village two worn pilgrims. The nephew's mother suddenly heard her son's voice at the door. Running out, with many tears and embraces she led him and Vethamánikam into the house, and the village people soon gathered to welcome them.

The simple folk prostrated themselves before the holy pilgrim, for here was a great saint who had come through much tribulation and had won eternal life. They asked him: "Where is the holy gift of the Lord of Chidambaram, and the sacred ashes?" Holding in his hand a copy of the Gospels, he replied: "Lo, here is the Holy Gift of the Lord of all worlds!"

From that time forward Vethamánikam gathered round him day by day such as were willing to hear more of the good news he had brought, and to them he read and expounded the Scriptures.

This patient teaching at last won its way to their hearts, and the simple folk often went home saying to themselves: "Good words, good words," until the truth of these good words began to find a re-

sponse, and little by little they decided to join Vethamanikam "in the New Way." A couple of hundred believers were thus gathered round this Christian pilgrim, and he growingly felt the need of some experienced teacher to come and shepherd the flock and carry on the work.

He gave Christian names to the members of his family, and strove to convince neighbouring Hindus of the folly of idolatry. Many listened, and were won to join themselves into a band of believers, but strong hostility was aroused in the Hindu community. He was excommunicated from his caste and persecuted in a hundred petty ways.

The news of these happenings reached the ears of the royal family, and it was soon made clear that his property and probably his life were unsafe. The situation becoming very difficult, he was advised to sell off his land and betake himself to other quarters. But he had learned to take his troubles to a higher source of wisdom. One day, reading his Testament, he burst out with the prayer: "O Lord, when I worshipped idols which have no life Thou didst reveal Thyself to me, a great sinner. Thou didst pass by the rich, the learned, the honourable people, and didst choose me to be Thine. Now teach me, O Lord, what I should do. Put me in Thy right path, and let me know what I should do in this difficulty. Is it Thy will that the light which has begun to shine here should be quenched? "

The answer came at once, in a fresh and fervid belief that God would work out His purposes. The convert would not sell his lands, but he would once more go on pilgrimage, to seek the help of his tried friends, the missionaries at Tanjore. At this time he was holding regular services, with increasing numbers of inquirers, and for these he made all necessary arrangements for being attended to in his absence. Then he started on his way to Tanjore.

When he reached his destination he was amazed to hear that help was at hand. "God has had mercy upon you, and has sent you a missionary, who is now learning your language in Madras," he was told. With a bounding heart he made his way to Madras, and there met and talked with the young man, Ringeltaube, who had the honour of becoming the first Protestant missionary to Travancore.

As Ringeltaube listened to the story of how God had dealt with Vethamánikam, his spirit kindled within him, but he knew he must finish the language work before proceeding to his new sphere. So, heartening the pilgrim-missionary, he sent him back to his people laden with Scriptures and tracts, and with the promise that he would follow him ere long.

Vethamánikam found upon his return that his little flock were undisturbed and steadfast, and they were filled with joy at the message he

brought. He publicly brought forth his heathen books and burned them, and even his horoscope; he also burned the Hindu temple he had built before he heard of Christ; and it was noted from that day that he grew in nobility of character, in gentleness and grace. His face changed to such an extent that when his enemies looked upon it they could not visit upon him their evil intentions.

At last came the glad news that the white missionary was on his way south. On April 25, 1806, Ringeltaube stood on the British side of the mountain barrier separating Travancore from British India. With a tumultuous heart he travelled through the Aramboli Pass, to behold "the grandest prospect of green-clad precipices, cloud-capped mountains, hills adorned with temples and castles and other picturesque objects." That day Vethamánikam "rejoiced more than if the whole of Travancore had come into my possession."

Weary and excited, the missionary arrived at the first travellers' rest house on the first night, and eating his simple meal he lay down to sleep. But a Bráhmín official was there. Horrified at sharing the house with a Christian, he sent word to the missionary to leave at once—his presence defiled the place. Gathering up his small belongings, Ringeltaube pressed on to Vethamánikam's village, spending his first hours of sleep in a mud hut. Next day he wrote in his journal: "Reached

my present home full of gratitude to God my Saviour for prospering my way."

The heart of Vethamánikam was now at rest. He had done his best. He knew he had been led by the Spirit of God, and he gladly handed over to Ringeltaube the work that he had so well begun. During the ten years in which this heroic soul worked among the people, Vethamánikam upheld and strengthened his hands. Then the missionary left for furlough—and was never heard of again.

Faithfully the two had toiled together, and well indeed they had laid the foundations of a great Christian Church in Travancore, one with an influence such as they could not foresee. To-day the descendants of Vethamánikam hold honourable place in the Church of Christ in that pleasant land and some have won distinction in scholarship and filled high positions under both the Travancore and British Governments.

In his last letter to his Missionary Board, Ringeltaube declared: "My work is done, and finished so as to bear the stamp of permanency. Your money cannot be said to be lost. You will find it in Heaven, and in the annals of the Church of Travancore." How true this is, the amazing work in that little State to-day testifies; and all honour be accorded to the name of Vethamanikam the first pilgrim-priest to take the news of the Gospel to that lovely land!

XV

MOSES WALSALAM

MALAYĀM POET-PREACHER

TRAVANCORE is one of the most ancient native states of India, boasting its own government, its own laws, coinage and postal system. The simplicity of life and dress, in spite of the inflow of western teaching, is still retained to a great extent. Yet against these old usages stands the brave fact that the native state of Travancore heads the list in educational advancement, not only among the seven hundred or more native states but also in the whole country of India. In January, 1927, the percentage of literacy among men and women is given as follows:

British India: Men, 139; women, 21 per thousand.

Travancore: Men, 380; women, 173 per thousand.

And all the other states lie between these figures.

Well may this small state call itself "chosen and peculiar ground." Well may its inhabitants believe that it came forth fresh from the sea at the bidding of the gods. Its physical beauty can only be matched in the far north, in Nepal and Kash-

mir, and Kashmir stands lowest of the whole of India in point of literacy.

This fascinating little country has lured people of many races through many centuries. Far back in the ages the Syrian Church established itself in Travancore; colonies of Jews settled there, and the White Jews' Synagogue is still one of the sights for travellers to visit. The Roman Church early found a home there; and more than a century ago the first Protestant missionary was led tremblingly there by the first Protestant Pilgrim-Christian, a man who had left his own country to seek peace at distant Hindu shrines, and found it at the door of a Christian Church in Tanjore. To-day myriads in that little country claim Jesus as Lord, and of them Walsala Sástri has left behind him the fragrant memory of a beautiful life.

As far back as 1837 the Rev. John Cox was sent by God to be the first Protestant missionary in Trivandram, the capital of Travancore. The first Indian preacher to assist him was named Anthony; he had left the Roman Church, which his parents before him had entered from heathenism. Anthony was peculiar not only in being beloved of his missionary but in still retaining the good will of his Hindu friends, one of whom was very bigoted where his religion was concerned. But eventually he gave himself to Christ, and his son, the Rev. K. P. Thomas, was for years the assistant missionary of Trivandram and the dis-

trict. In 1847 Anthony was blessed by the birth of a son, who was taken at the age of three months to the missionary. Taking the child in his arms, the missionary called him by the name of Moses, and at the same time prayed that the infant should grow up to serve the Lord as did Moses of old.

As a little boy, Moses distinguished himself in the matter of good memory, which served him well during later years. He early learned to read the two vernaculars of Tamil and Malayalam, and at the age of ten he began the study of Sanskrit. In the old fashion which prevails to this day in India, he was made to commit the Sanskrit Grammar and Lexicon entirely to memory. Three years later the Syrian bishop began to teach him English. Eventually he joined the London Missionary Society's Theological Seminary in Nagercoil, and it was there that he learned to sing Tamil lyrics.

During the time Moses was studying at the seminary he and two other students agreed to make a habit of going out to some chalk hills for united prayer. This silent spot lent itself to meditation and reflection as well as to prayer, and there one day all three received a vision of Christ which caused them immediately to consecrate their lives to the work of preaching the Gospel.

In 1868 Moses was married. In his diary these words occur: "I married my wife simply for her humble disposition, and my prayer at the moment of tying the tháli [necklace used instead of a

wedding ring] was that the Lord would grant us peace, and it has been answered.”

Having finished his course at the seminary, Moses took up teaching, which left him free time for the prosecution of further studies. He spent much time in teaching himself to play the violin and other musical instruments; at the same time he taught himself drawing, the use of colours in painting and how to make his own colours. All this knowledge he consecrated to God, and how well he used these talents was shown by the remarkable coloured lantern slides he himself had produced, which had real artistic merit; and finally through his knowledge of music and poetry he taught thousands of heretofore silent tongues to sing God's praises.

The study of poetry was taken up with much zest. In his diary he remarked:

“In 1872 I composed my first lyric, which was speedily followed by others. I had learnt by constant study the ideas and usages of the Malayálam and Tamil, Telugu and Sanskrit poets, and in English I read Milton and a translation of Dante, besides making a study of the best English hymns.”

It was about this time also that he and his wife agreed “not to lay up treasure upon earth, but to be spent for Christ alone.” In 1874 Moses heard a Tanjore Sástri conduct a service with music and the singing of hymns, which was something quite

new to him, and which inspired him to compose Malayálam lyrics for use in the church services. A year later he went up to North Travancore at the invitation of the Syrian bishop to teach his own lyrics to the people there. That the ancient Syrian Church benefited by his teaching the following letter shows:

“ Blessings to all our spiritual children! The poet Moses Walsalam has come to our presence, and with musical instruments has sung some beautiful lyrics he has composed on the birth, sufferings and death of our Lord, and still others which promote Christian knowledge. He has explained the messages contained in them, and with them we are satisfied, and hope that these lyrics will awaken the hearts of the hearers to thoughts of the Saviour. . . . For this great service to the Christian Church we find him worthy of the title *Walsala Sástri*. All our churches should gladly listen to these lyrics, and all should accept this good man with affection.

“ May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ increase with you all.”

This letter was issued by Már Dionysius, the Metropolitan of Malabár, to all the churches of the Syrian community under his care.

It was doubtless trying to the eager spirit of the man, just at this crisis in his career, to be asked to act for a while as head of the mission office under the missionary who had succeeded the Rev. John Cox. The Rev. S. Mateer was a highly cultured man, and felt much sympathy with Moses in his

aspirations, and so well did he think of his musical ability that Mr. Mateer, after hearing him play on the violin, presented him with a Cremona violin. Also, seeing that every spare moment in the office Moses used in the study of the Sanskrit language, the missionary enabled him to procure some rare books in Sanskrit prosody and rhetoric, as well as other books.

During this period Moses wrote his first book, which he called *A Garland of Prayer*. This was succeeded by a number of others, some in poetical form. Probably being stirred by reading Milton's *Paradise Lost* and the translation of Dante, Moses wrote *The Wonderful Vision*, containing, as he himself said, "scenes of death, judgment, hell and heaven." By the request of Dr. Murdoch, of Madras, he wrote a book called *The Golden Chaplet*, a poem on the work of Christ, and this he followed by a *Life of Christ*, and in 1879 he published *The Lamentations of the Daughters of Jerusalem*.

The missionary set the poet free during these times for evangelistic work in the surrounding villages, and almost his first fruits were two dear Hindu friends, who through him were brought to know Christ and to make public confession of their faith by baptism. For three years Moses continued his labours among the simple village folk of his own country, but he also went up north again to preach and teach among the churches of

the Jacobite Syrians. For this latter work the archbishop, the suffragan bishops and leading laymen of this large and important section of the Syrian Church, met together and conferred upon him the same title which he had already received from the Már Thoma Syrians, and from this time he was known by the honourable designation of *Walsala Sástri*.

The Cremona violin went with him everywhere, and many Hindus and Mahommedans began to seek him out, often visiting him under cover of darkness. A remarkable vision which he appears never to have divulged to anyone deeply affected him about this time. Naturally of a humble mind, he now the more earnestly desired to lead the simplest possible life; closing his heart to the insidious temptation of using his gifts for worldly advancement, he strenuously gave himself to preaching, in which work his every talent found full use.

In travelling through the villages Moses came across some of the low forms of worship prevalent among the poorer people. Hinduism is only now beginning to consider whether so many myriads of the poorest of the land (sixty-six millions) should be cut off from the common rights of men, and cast out from their religion in the terrible way they have been for so many centuries. But in the days when Moses walked from place to place preaching Christ to rich and poor this was not so. The poor

folk in their thousands were forbidden to use the public roads, to pass by a sacred shrine or temple, to approach or meet a high-caste man on the street. They were as completely cut off from their religion as if they did not exist. They therefore had little from which to construct a religion of their own.

They believed in evil spirits, dreaded their power, and acknowledged demon possession. No good gods, to help or succour in time of need, but for them alone the terrors of darkness! Pitiably indeed through the centuries has been the lot of these millions of outcastes for whom no place was found in the Hindu religion. To appease their terrible and powerful devil-gods, they have built their altars under the trees. There they sacrifice goats, in order to appease some vicious demon, and round these streaming altars the devil dancers whirl, to the haunting sound of the tom-tom, all through the night. Even the caste people of India have some superstition that the devil dancer may be of use to them at certain times, and his offices are called in when such seasons occur.

On one such occasion the attention of Moses was called to the matter. He was that day walking along a road with some Christian helpers when they heard devil dancers' music coming from a rich caste-man's house. Immediately they entered the garden of the house, and found a large company of caste people gathered round some of these dancers

and watching the proceedings. It was whispered that an evil charm was bringing trouble to the family, and it was supposed that the charm was hidden away underground near the house. The dancers had been called in to locate the spot. Three grotesquely dressed devil dancers, painted and plumed to look as horrible as possible, were using a divining rod and playing wild music, and every now and then all three would whirl round as if demented. The sight was weird in the extreme, and the crowd had fallen under the spell. As Moses crept nearer to see what was being done, the diviner announced that the charm in the spot he was digging up had gone down to the bottomless pit. Moses relates:

“At that moment I addressed the crowd, calling upon the devil dancers to cease from their work, which I saw could only result in further harm. God gave me a good hearing both with the caste people and the dancers, and I urged them to come next Sunday to the London Mission church close by, when I would speak to them again. The Sunday came, and a number of the invited guests arrived, and in the front of them all sat the three devil dancers. I preached on death, judgment, hell and heaven, whilst my choir sang lyrics suitable for the occasion. I closed with a direct appeal to the devil dancers, asking them what choice they would make—Christ or devil worship. With one accord all three accepted Christ, and from that day forward they have attended church regularly. All have remained faithful, and two of them are deacons of the church to-day.”

Seeing that this evil worship not only kept thousands of his fellow-men in bondage, but that it had become a source of livelihood for them to exorcise evil spirits, Moses sought by every means in his power to help the people to cast off the chains of superstition and terror which kept them in such degradation. One more case selected from many will show how far he was successful in this effort. It is given in his own words:

“ I went to the house of a woman who was said to be possessed of an evil spirit. She was sitting on the ground holding an areca flower in her hand, whilst a performance similar to the one described above was going on round her. I stood close by, and, holding my cap in my hand, I earnestly begged of God to heal the woman in His own way. Presently she threw away the flower and, rising up, she declared herself quite well. The devil dancers were much distressed, and asked why we had come to interfere. I replied, ‘ If your gods are afraid of a poor man like me, how much more will they fear the great Lord we worship? ’ A young Hindu had called me to this woman, and accompanied me to the house. From that day this Hindu gave up his old faith and confessed Christ, and later he became the means of bringing his own parents and family to the Saviour, and all of them are useful Christians in the church to-day.”

The next two years were filled with evangelistic tours all over Travancore. In quiet hours when he should have been resting he wrote more books, and in 1886 he again visited the Syrian churches

of North Travancore. That year a rather celebrated controversialist named Mathakandi Sástri had begun disputations against Jesus among the college students in Trivandram. The knowledge Moses had gathered in earlier years of the great Hindu holy books now became of great use. He wrote out many questions and sent them with a request that this Hindu would kindly answer them. The reply came back that he could not get the permission of his superiors to reply to such questions, so that the students and others began to doubt his powers, and they lost interest in him. As a result of this, Moses now applied himself to the study of Arabic, in order to be able to meet Mahommedans on their own ground, which he hoped to be able to do after studying their Qurán in the original.

In 1891 Moses was separated for the work of preaching the Gospel at a place called Káttákada. Up to that time he had retained the tuft of long hair known as "kudmi," but he now removed it. This he did because he realized that it was a distinctive mark of caste, regarded by Hindus as a sign that men are of the Hindu religion.

Káttákada is a place of considerable importance, about fourteen or sixteen miles out of Trivandram, the capital of the state. It boasts three famous Hindu temples and many idol groves. It is also a great central market for supplying all the countryside with necessities. In many small villages in the vicinity Christian work was being carried on.

When Moses settled there he started a custom which he believed resulted in much spiritual good to his congregation. The people were called to service by the striking of a circular disc of metal, a gong which sent its piercing notes over hill and dale and told the people it was time to start for church. It was the duty of the man who swept the church to sound the gong. Moses at once took this duty upon himself, and with every stroke of the gong he offered up a special prayer for each family in his church, until every family had been thus remembered, and then he would hand over charge of the gong to the proper ringer.

Sixteen miles north of Trivandram, amid beautiful mountain scenery and on the top of a low hill, is the long thatched church with mud walls, rough wooden doors and glassless windows overlooking the dusty road. Here this faithful shepherd cared for his sheep. The dark but commodious building accommodated some eight hundred people, and usually at service time it was full from end to end. The floor of dried mud is carefully swept, and at the far end is a wooden pulpit with a history of its own. Long years ago a Christian woman knelt at the side of her son, who seemed sick unto death, and the prayer rose from her agonized heart: "O God, spare my son! If Thou wilt spare his life I vow that I will make a thank-offering to Thy Church of a pulpit. O, I pray that Thou wilt spare my son!" Her son lived, and poor though

she was, she kept her word. The pulpit stands to-day as a witness to the answered prayer of a Christian mother.

It is early Sunday morning, and Moses stands, mallet in hand, slowly striking the gong as he prays. The sharp metallic sound quickly travels over the countryside, and soon from far and near groups of cleanly, white-dressed people stream along from all directions. Many carry babies in their arms and have other little ones clinging to them. Many more, along with their Bibles and hymn-books, carry little bundles of food, for this is their one day free from work of all kinds, and they will spend it in the church or under the trees. Services, Sunday School, and Christian Endeavour and prayer-meetings fill the happy hours. The rising sun sees these simple folk assembling, and in the evening his red and golden rays fall upon them like a blessing as they toil slowly homewards to face another week of work.

The second bell has stopped, and Moses, in his simple white clothes, has entered the church. On his right, in serried ranks on the floor, sit the men and boys of the congregation, and on his left are the women and babies. Soon the people rise to sing their morning hymn of praise, Moses leading; and it seems as if the very roof would be lifted by their song of joy. Then quietly subsiding, all the congregation prostrate themselves, forehead to the ground, while one voice pleads at the throne of

grace. The sermon is a bit of fire from the altar of love, and men and women feel themselves brought for a sacred moment to the mount of God.

As the last words fall the silence is profound, and even the "taking of the collection" cannot break the spell. Poor indeed, as far as this world is concerned and mean in the eyes of the world, are these humble hundreds of people, but they have found a heritage with which they could never part. Blessed indeed is the man who led them to the feet of Jesus!

Not long after Moses settled in that place, such crowds assembled to hear him preach that the church would not hold them, and numbers stood throughout the service on the verandahs rather than go away. At first a large proportion of the congregation was unable to sing or take part in the service, so Moses prepared a very simple liturgy, which they quickly learned by heart. He took great pains to teach them to sing, and the hymns he wrote were so easy that the labouring man very soon knew both words and tune.

Lying at the foot of the hills, Káttákada is a malarious place, and Moses needed to be doctor as well as pastor to his flock. He had little in the way of medicine to dispense, but as he often said: "With little medicine and much prayer many were healed," insomuch that many people came from great distances, and those unable to walk were carried to the church for prayer and medicine.

Here Moses found a great deal of devil-worship among the poor non-Christians, large numbers being completely under the power of demons whom they believed had taken possession of them. These people came to Moses to pray over them—from distant places as well as near by, and many remarkable instances of cure took place.

Five happy years were spent in this place, full of loyal and devoted service, during which time Moses lost one of his children, a trial which inspired him to write a book called *Meditation Songs*. Not long after this event Moses was called to the work for which he had all along been supremely fitted; he was set free to use his evangelistic powers wherever he felt called to go. From this time onwards he nobly filled the post of travelling evangelist throughout that district.

When he started out on his journeys no one, not even his family, knew where he would be or when he was likely to return. He would bid his wife and children farewell, and with some copies of the Scriptures, his violin and tracts, and with no provision for personal needs, he would start on his peregrinations. In true sádhu fashion he did his work and lived his life through those arduous years.

He would walk to some central village, settle there and visit all the surrounding places from that spot, preaching everywhere as he went. Calls to sick and devil-haunted folk were responded to;

visits were paid to non-Christian homes, and persons were pleaded with, prayed with, and taught. Preaching in the central churches as he reached them, he brought encouragement to many a flagging Christian teacher and preacher. Finding people more at leisure at night, he often spent half the night in discussing with men and persuading them to find peace in Christ.

His gentleness commended him where other characteristics might have failed, and everywhere he became known as a man of pure and humble spirit, devoted to his Master, open to the cry of the weak and needy, and of unswerving loyalty to his Lord's command to "preach the gospel to every creature."

He gathered round him young men who willingly accompanied him when they could, and helped him carry the magic lantern and violin, with which he charmed so many thousands during a long life of service. The lantern slides, which he made and coloured himself, held the crowds for hours on end, and he was always a welcome visitor to church and school, village, town and home.

Dr. Macnicol says: "There is scarcely a greater gift, except that of a holy life, that anyone can give to the Church of Christ than songs winged with poetry and insight, that will lift the singers' heart to God." Moses Walsalam not only lived the holy life, but to his own country and people he brought the inestimable gift of Christian lyrics,

and added to them many excellent translations of English hymns. Before his day these lyrics were unknown in the Malayálam country, and only Tamil lyrics were sung by Tamil people there. His real talent for poetry was thus used. Hundreds of spiritual songs sung at Christian services throughout the Malayálam country are from the pen of this good man.

His work never became an irksome task to him. He wore himself out with exceeding great joy in the service of God and the loving pursuit of human souls. Naturally strong, he never measured his strength but gave prodigally, until in his last years nature sent in the bill, and he became full of weakness and pain.

Even so, he would not give up his beloved work. Hearing of his weakened condition, a generous Scotch lady made him a gift of a bullock cart and a pair of bullocks, which enabled him to continue his evangelistic tours for some while longer. This cart he painted all over with Scripture texts, and a Gospel banner, declaring that the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost, floated over it, as Moses trundled over the rough country roads at the speed of two miles an hour.

Before the end of his life, Moses wrote at the end of his diary:

“ These facts are written to show how God prepares those whom He is pleased to use for His glory; how we can approach Him and how wonderfully He answers

our prayers. May these facts really encourage the apostles of the Saviour who are working in this heathen land! ”

Hard, unremitting toil took toll of him at last. The familiar figure was no longer seen walking, or in cart, church or village. No longer did spell-bound crowds sit for hours listening with rapt attention to the story of redeeming love. In vain disheartened workers longed for his loving cheer. The missionary knew that his unfailing friend was stricken to death.

Wherever there had been sickness, sorrow, pain or death Moses Walsalam had been there to lead the stricken ones to the Source of all comfort. Gentle as a woman, himself one of nature's true gentlemen, yet in preaching a veritable lion, wherever he went he brought men nearer the great Shepherd of the sheep.

His last days were clouded by extreme weakness and pain, but to the end his faculties remained clear and his faith strong. From his sick bed he dictated many hymns, when he could no longer write with his own hand, and he compiled a valuable work on Indian music. Then on a beautiful morning in February, 1916, the call came.

It was Sunday, and he passed from the darkness of his sick room through the sunlight while thousands of Christians all over his own land were singing his hymns in their morning services. Through all the dark months of his illness Moses

Walsalam bore his sufferings with exemplary fortitude. No murmur ever escaped his lips. Of him it may truly be said: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, and their works do follow them."

In the present generation he holds a loving place in the hearts of hundreds, but long after those who knew him in the flesh have passed away, Moses Walsalam will have an abiding monument to his memory in the lyrics and hymns he has left as a heritage to the Malayalam Church. Succeeding generations will rise up to bless the name of one who has put upon the lips of many thousands such songs of faith and hope and love as bring them daily nearer God.

TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE EAST

THESE brief biographies may suggest to the reader some of the problems, spiritual and political, which are hindering the coming of Christ's Kingdom in the land of India. That there is a movement towards Christ among men and women there, making them growingly conscious of His power, is an undeniable fact, and we may well rejoice that these records lift the veil, making the East grow rosy in a dawn showing Christ to be the rising Sun.

"The unchanging East" has joined the great march onwards of the nations of the world, and it is now the duty and privilege of all who name the Name of Christ to understand and be in touch with the movements that are shaking the ancient civilization of India to the very heart.

Many forces have joined to bring about the unprecedented changes now going on in that land; but they are so far away, and the conditions of life there are so different from anything western people know, that it is difficult to appreciate what will be the end, or what its results may be at no far future date. Among the contributory forces the most apparent was the Great War, but before that time the continual inflow of western learning

was raising up a new generation of men who could not follow in the old grooves of their forefathers.

Not less important a factor has been the dissemination of the Christian Scriptures, the reading and teaching of which through a century has undermined the impregnable fortresses of eastern religions, modifying them and adding to the disintegrating processes going on, and to the new building up of life in this old land.

It is sometimes claimed that the people of the West have been culpably ignorant of the great country and people of India—a charge which is unfortunately difficult entirely to refute. As far as India is concerned, most of us who are British have been from our early days accepting the half-told tales of historians with regard to the acquisition of that great dependency as the whole of the truth. All are familiar with accounts of the terrible doings at Cawnpore in the Sepoy Mutiny, but nothing has been taught us of the brutal conduct that characterized the acts of our own people all through those days. Every English child has read with horror of the Black Hole of Calcutta, but who has heard of the dry well near the banks of the Ravi, where the bodies of two hundred and eighty-two disbanded Indian troops were cast, two hundred and thirty-seven of whom were shot, the remainder dying of “fright, exhaustion, heat and suffocation” during the night previously passed in the bastion of the police station?

These same histories have been used in the colleges and schools where Indian youths study under English professors. How more than irritating, nay, dangerous are such accounts in rousing the Indian mind against us! Under such circumstances it is difficult for two countries to come to a right understanding, to hold sympathetic views, or even an open mind to one another. How serious a stumbling-block such things are the missionary knows well, for in India English rule has become, in the minds of many, one with Christianity, a feeling fostered by all who are antagonistic to British overlordship.

A hundred years ago the foreign missionary was said to have followed the trader in order "to wrest from Indians what religious independence remained to them." The utter falsity of this statement has long ago been abundantly proved, but to-day India spurns things of the west. The awakening of a new national spirit, allied to the formidable problem of racialism, is responsible for embittering the minds of men who should be one in all that matters. But in those early days men went from the West filled with a burning devotion to Christ, and a deep determination to make Him known.

This devotion and determination were made all the greater by the blatant idolatry and all its consequent evils which they saw. It is little wonder that something of denunciation and criticism came

into their attempt to shatter religions which seemed so opposed to all they understood of Christ. Moreover, the converts from Hinduism of those days shared these same feelings against their own religion. Pandita Rámabai felt that she had escaped from the blackness of despair in fleeing from Hinduism to Christ, and some of Pandit Nehemiah Goreh's most powerful argumentative books were written against Hinduism with no unsparing pen.

But to-day the missionary sees all that is good and worthy in other religions, exalts it and strives to show how all that is worthy in the aspirations of these systems lead up to and find fulfilment in the Lord Christ. In India from time immemorial men have sought after God, and their unique experiences fill one with hope that a nobler form of Christianity will develop as the religious peoples of India are captured by the Gospel.

The long connection of India with the West has shown us that she places religion before all else. A sympathetic study of other religions and of the mentality of eastern minds has done much to bring men of different training and outlook to a better understanding, and to-day the prospects are brighter, even in spite of political upheavals, than formerly. That Christ has laid hold of the eastern mind, that in Him they behold One like unto the Son of God; and that He takes a share in these changes is seen in a thousand ways. When Lord

Irwin went as Viceroy to India the enlightened non-Christian editor of the *Social Reformer* recognized the fact that "Lord Irwin is a devout member of his Church, which in this country will be deemed a special qualification for dealing with great affairs of State."

Occasionally missionaries invite non-Christian Indians to address their annual conferences. Recently at a Calcutta conference Professor Rádhakrishnan correctly stated the attitude of educated Indians towards Christianity when he said:

"The greatest gift of all is Jesus Christ. You have brought India face to face with Jesus Christ. If you devote less time, energy and fervour to preaching and polemics, and direct all your tremendous powers to the practice of love, you will deepen and elevate the religious life of the Indian people. . . . Hinduism is attempting to slough off its superstitions and purify itself, and there is no greater mission for you than to help her in the process."

A great Bráhmó Samaj thinker, Pandit Sítanath Tattvabhúsan is manifestly inspired by the teaching of Jesus. After strongly condemning idol-worship he continues:

"The degrading effect of idolatry lies in the fact that an image represents the lowest manifestation of divinity, such as to be no manifestation of spirit at all; even a worm as living, being a higher manifestation of it. The main factor in the perpetuation of image-worship in Hindu society will be found in the persistent

effort of the priestly classes. At first it was Vedic sacrifices, and now it is image-worship which serves as the fulcrum of this long-continued movement. Overthrow this supremacy, loosen the tight hold both on the masses and the classes, and image-worship will die of sheer inanition. The fact is that God is a Spirit, an all-knowing, all-loving, all-holy Spirit, and should be worshipped in spirit and in truth."

One's first feeling is of disappointment that Hindus invite missionaries to assist more in the social uplift of the people than in proselytizing them. Years ago one Englishman discovered and acted upon his discovery of this secret. Mr. C. F. Andrews, through much adverse criticism, has won through to an ever deepening respect among missionaries, as well as winning an unique place in the love and admiration of Indians, by his whole-hearted co-operation with India in all measures for her uplift. The friend and colleague of Dr. Rabindranáth Tagore and Mahátma Gándhi, Dr. Alden Clark, says of him:

"C. F. Andrews, who probably understands the mind of modern India, and has greater influence over prominent Indians than any other European or American, and whose fundamental aim is deeply Christian, has recently advised missionaries to join hands with non-Christians in work for the outcastes, without seeking primarily to baptize these people into the Christian Church."

A Hindu student adds these simple words:

"Mr. C. F. Andrews has taken Jesus to Shantini-

ketan [Dr. Tagore's 'Abode of Peace']. He conducts Bible classes there. Students go and ask him to teach the Bible, and tell them about Jesus. He moves about India as a ministering angel of Jesus Christ. He even left the Church to stand for Christ; he dared to follow Jesus absolutely, forgetting he was an Englishman. He serves India not with superior consciousness but with sincere love and devotion." The student naïvely adds: "I will never like Andrews to go away from India."

The social reform movement in India is of comparatively recent date, for although India has been aware for more than a century—since the days of Rája Rám Mohan Roy—of such evils as child marriage and enforced widowhood, it is only now that men are moving towards a reformation. Even yet some Hindus are fighting a lonely battle for the oppressed of their country, and their cry is: "Come over and help us."

A keen spirit of inquiry is abroad in India. Non-Christians themselves are analyzing the Gospels and writing temperate articles about them. The men are not strangers to-day to Christian thought as were their forefathers, and their criticisms of Christ are seldom bitter. Strong waves of national and racial feeling have disturbed the equilibrium of the East, and many minds are unable at the moment to escape a feeling of bitterness and suspicion. Even so, the person of Christ at this very time is making a powerful appeal. Not Christianity as seen either among the people of their own race or in those of the West, but

Christ, His life, His teaching, stands supreme in the esteem of thoughtful minds, and evokes their admiration to such an extent that when they wish to compare some national hero of the day, it is not Krishna but Jesus Christ they choose for the purpose.

India is awake to her national needs, and men of different castes, languages, shades of opinion are rising up to claim for her those rights which they believe will make her a strong united nation capable of self-government. A new spirit of patriotism is being called forth, and a whole-hearted service which places country before all else is being demanded. Mahátma Gandhi, responding to this call, exclaims: "Though a Mussalmán or a Christian or a Hindu may despise and hate me, I want to love and serve him as I would my wife or my son." To the Indian Christian this call comes with a deeper meaning, a meaning Mahátma Gandhi has rightly construed it to hold, that of personal devotion to one's fellow-men, a devotion behind which is the strong spiritual compulsion to claim men for Christ by living like the Master he professes.

If India is sloughing off some of her age-long superstitions than it is high time that we revised our own ideas as to how Christ should be presented to India. Our creeds, dogmas, Church systems have little attraction for the Indian; our sects worry and confuse him. He wants to develop

Christianity on his own lines, and when this comes to pass, a new and surprisingly rich revelation may be looked for.

There is a distinct call to the churches of Christ to cleanse their own camps, and to convert their preaching into living. The real stumbling-block to the victory of Christ in the world is the deadness of His followers everywhere.

Some one has truly said that "God has endowed the Indian Church with capacities equal to her task. . . . Her special gifts are subtlety of intellect, a religious temper that links religion and life in all its aspects, and a great capacity for self-renunciation." Another Indian declares that his country's supreme need can only be supplied by Christ, and that can only be done:

"By coming face to face with *supreme demonstrations of the Spirit of Christ by servants of Christ*, toiling and moiling amidst the masses with the absence of all intrusion, coercion or self-assertion, a recreative force. As the children of India behold such servants of Christ they will exclaim: 'Through such souls alone God, stooping, shows sufficient light in the dark to rise by; *and I rise.*'"

Indians are never ashamed to talk on religion. No surprise is felt when they are approached upon the subject, while an earnest appeal to consider the claims of Christ is invariably met with respect. An Asiatic points out the way to both missionaries and his own people as to how to meet

the needs of the hour: "A confident and candid presentation of the Christian message and a complete abandonment of all diffidence and attempts to be tactful is the way to command interest and attention."

The Christian Marathi poet, Naráyan Váman Tilak, is the case of a great Indian who surrendered his all for Christ without losing one whit of his love for country or his true spirit of patriotism. He spoke for many Indians besides himself when he declared that the greatest proof of the divine mission of Jesus lies in His sublime and beautiful character and teaching.

"It was the strongest desire that India should be given a new faith which might elevate her that led me to embrace Christianity. Finding that Jesus was far superior to the ideal man whom my brain had created, and finding that His faith was far superior to that which I had invented, I followed Him and His faith."

Such a day of opportunity and responsibility has never visited the Church of Christ as is seen to-day. What is going to carry these ancient peoples through this age of cataclysm? Their ancient religions are impotent. God's personality is but dimly perceived. Sin and forgiveness of sin are not comprehended. The call of God is clear and insistent to those who are His children. Nothing but Christ can bind India together and meet its needs. The people are slowly learning that they

need not be denationalized if they follow Christ. They may retain all that is good and worthy of their ancient civilizations.

It is with amazed joy that the East discovers within herself a response to the call of Him who was born in the East, and needs that no man cast away what is worthy and noble of his own race or country. "I came not to destroy but to fulfil," said Christ, and surely these words must have meant more than the fulfilment of the expectation of the Jews! He looked into the dim future and saw the nations of the earth—"a great multitude which no man can number"—looking to Him and finding in Him full satisfaction for every spiritual need.

It would be vain to imagine that India stands with open arms to welcome Christ, but in spite of the failures of Christendom, she reverences Him, and in many cases is putting something of His spirit into practice by trying to reform her own faiths.

A leading convert from Hinduism gives the key to this movement towards Christ in these words: "I assert that it is the Gospel of Christ, the Gospel of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man, which has changed the angle of vision of my Indian brethren." India is giving deep attention to Christ now partly because of her great leader Mahátma Gandhi, whose example under misrepresentation and suffering has often called forth their

admiration and caused them to compare him with our great Lord Himself.

In the weekly paper called *Young India*, which is Mr. Gandhi's organ, he recently was publishing "The Story of My Experiments with Truth," and in the introduction he says:

"What I want to achieve, what I have been striving and pining for for these thirty years, is self-realization, *i. e.*, to see God face to face. I live and move and have my being in the pursuit of this goal. . . . There are innumerable definitions of God, because His manifestations are innumerable. They overwhelm me with wonder and awe and for a moment stun me. But I worship God as Truth only. He alone is Real, and all else is unreal. I have not yet found Him, but *I am after Him*. I am prepared to sacrifice the things dearest to me in pursuit of this quest, even if the sacrifice demanded be my very life I hope I am prepared to give it. . . . Often in my progress have I had glimpses of the Absolute Truth, God; and the conviction that He only is Real, all else is unreal is daily growing upon me. . . . It is an unbroken torture to me that I am still so far from Him, who, I know, governs every breath of my life, and whose offspring I am."

The East is searching, waiting for Christ.

Christ goes forth to meet the needs of East and West. He calls men and women to join Him in the greatest enterprise the world has ever known. Thrice blessed is he who, forgetting all else, steps forth with Christ through suffering and the cross to bring a ransomed world to His feet.

CHRIST AND INDIAN WOMANHOOD

An Indian lady once said to the author, "Oh, tell me again who He was! And tell me slowly, for I forget so soon."

*"Tell us again, dear lady! Tell us again of Him,
The Man you call Christ Jesus, who takes away
our sin;*

*Tell us how we can love Him, and who He was, and
where*

*The place of His abiding, and how we may get there;
Oh, tell us all about Him, and where His place of rest,
And what the work He doeth, and whom He loveth
best.*

*And can we go to Him and see His beauteous face;
Or will He come to us Himself with messages of
grace?*

*"Oh, tell it very slowly, that we may take it in!
Our minds are dull and heavy, our hearts are full
of sin;*

*We never heard such tidings of gladness and of rest;
Our hearts would bound with pleasure if we such
Friend possessed.*

*Alas! how little know we, how soon we all forget,
How great soe'er the tidings, they pass away 'mid fret,
And toil and burden of our downtrodden lives;
Oh, teach us, help us, sisters, as mothers and as wives!*

*"We need the Living Fountain; O sisters, hold not
back!*

*We need the Bread of Heaven; sisters, put us on
the track;*

*Pray much for wakening India, pray much, O sisters, dear;
 And visit our Zananas with words of hope and cheer.
 We look to you for knowledge, to ope the door of
 hope,
 For we in our born-blindness after the Light must
 grope;
 If He can scatter darkness, and ignorance and sin,
 Oh, open wide the gates of hope, and let us enter in!*

*“O sisters, we are perishing, our hearts are hun-
 gering sore;
 Oh, give us of the Bread of Life, that we may
 want no more;
 Have pity, in the Name of Christ, on our souls’
 deepest need,
 And help us from the depths of night to find our
 Light indeed.”*

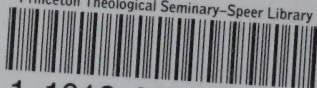
—MRS. H. H. ISACKE.

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